AL-KISA FOUNDATION

UNDER THE CLOAK OF GUIDANCE AND MERCY

Muharram Project Booklet

MUHARRAM 1441 | 2019

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Please recite a Fātiḥah for the marḥūmīn of all those who contributed to this booklet.

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بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

Salāmun ʿAlaykum,
May Allah bless us, our families, and our communities.

Our sincerest condolences to the Imām of our time, Imām al-Mahdī (aj), our great marājiʿ and scholars, the Muslim ummah, and all the believers on the upcoming commemoration of Imām Ḥusayn's (a) shahādah.

The onset of Muḥarram marks the beginning of the Islamic new year. While all other new years start with celebration and joy, our new year begins with mourning and sorrow in accordance to the tradition of our Prophets and Ahl al-Bayt (a). We commemorate the tragedy of Karbalāʾ each year with more grandeur than the previous year. Without a doubt, Muḥarram and Safar hold the same value to our faith as blood does to the human body.

Indeed, Muḥarram is the spring of flourishing our maʿrifah — deeper understanding — and spirituality. This month is full of important lessons on self building for everyone — men and women, old and young, Muslim and non-Muslim. Therefore, we all must take advantage of these two months and benefit from them to the best of our ability, especially our children.

This is why in Muḥarram 2013, we launched a structured children's program at SABA, which consisted of a speech and simple crafts. After seeing how successful the program was, alḥamdulillah, we took it to the next level the following year by developing more complex projects centered around the main themes of Muḥarram. The program was then expanded to Shahr Ramaḍān, Thursday nights, and every other main program in the masjid (e.g., wilādāt, shahādāt, etc.). When we saw how greatly children were benefitting, we began sending the lesson plans out to different centers and received positive feedback, alḥamdulillāh.

In 2016, with the tawfīq of Allah, Kisa Kids (www.kisakids.org) was launched, with the focus of creating an Islamic educational infrastructure and providing Islamic curricula, Islamic literature, and Islamic project resources for children. We also piloted the Muḥarram Project Collective and received great feedback. This Muḥarram 2019/1441, we are happy to launch the fourth annual Muḥarram Project Collective. The kits in this package include 11 speeches and 12 lesson plans that have been put together in collaboration with scholars and educators, as well as supplies for the projects. We must help our children nurture their Islamic identities and become ambassadors in this part of the world — and the first place this starts from is the family and masjid.

Dear brothers and sisters, we must attend these majālis and live the next nights as if we are in the presence of our 12th Imām (aj). If the Imām (aj) was with us today, and he is, what would our next 10 nights look like? I urge myself and all of you to keep the following five points in mind:

1. The majālis and gatherings in our masājid and centers the next 10 nights are key elements for us to increase our educational and spiritual maʿrifah (deeper understanding) and baṣīrah (insight). As you attend majālis during these nights, think of it as attending a special course in the University of Ahl al-Bayt (a). This course is only offered once a year, so take advantage.

2. Knowledge needs an elixir in order for it to turn our souls and actions into God-intended actions. This elixir is ṭaharah (spiritual cleanliness). Let us remember Allah through the tears we shed. As we perform ṣalāh and recite Qurʾān, let us remember the ṣalāh Imām Ḥusayn (A) performed on the day of Ashura and the Qurʾān he recited from atop the spear. And let us purify our souls to reach that status of those who are sincere.
3. These nights should be used to strengthen our emotional connection to the Ahl al-Bayt (a) and solidify our love for them. Let us become true muḥibbīn — lovers of the Ahl al-Bayt (a).
4. Let us direct our love and status of muhibbeen to help us become muṭiʿīn — those who are obedient toward Allah and the Ahl al-Bayt (a). Let this love be the ignition of ʿamal aṣ-ṣāliḥ — pure actions.
5. With the above four points, let us become the true ambassadors of Islam and demonstrate this in the best possible way: through our akhlāq. As Imām aṣ-Ṣādiq (a) has narrated:

يا معشرالشيعة إنكم قد نُسبتم إلينا, كونوا لنا زيناً, ولا تكونوا علينا شينا

O Shīʿāh! You are connected to us, so be ornaments for us, and do not be a disgrace for us.

Brothers and sisters, to become true ambassadors of Imām Ḥusayn (a) and Islam, we need to take these 10 days as an opportunity for change. In these nights, let us have fruitful discussions where we reflect upon and discuss what we have learned from the lectures and majalis.Let's strengthen our relationship with our Creator and Nurturer during these 10 nights. Let us answer our Creator when He calls us and establish our ṣalāh on time, the same ṣalāh that was so near and dear to our beloved Imām Ḥusayn (a).

Pray for the Muslim ummah, and bring awareness to your children so they can prepare for the ẓuhūr of Imām al-Mahdī (aj). Talk to them about everything that is happening in the world, especially to our Muslim brothers and sisters and the children who are being oppressed all around the world in Burma, Yemen, Syria, Kashmir, Palestine, Bahrain, Iraq, Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, and everywhere else.

Our humble request is to create a two-way connection by all of us sharing our expertise and experiences and avoiding duplicated work, in order to maximize our potential. Please share your ideas, experiences, and successes with us, so that together, we can all move forward and build a global network, inshāʾAllah.

We pray that Allah gives us the tawfīq to actualize our duties and responsibilities.

With Duʿās
Nabi R. Mir (Abidi)
Resident ʿĀlim of SABA Islamic Center

AL-KISA FOUNDATION
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Muḥarram Project Kit Tutorial

Salāmun ʿAlaykum,

May Allah bless you, your family, and your community, inshāʾAllah. We pray that He accepts all of our efforts in trying to instill in our children the love of the Ahl al-Bayt (a) and the message of Karbalāʾ.

Inshallah this Muḥarram kit is a small step towards our children embodying the characteristics of the Ahl al-Bayt (a) and developing a relationship with Abā ʿAbdillāh al-Ḥusayn (a).

This booklet contains the following:
- 11 project lesson plans
- 11 speeches with muṣībāt
- General guidelines for speeches

The activities and speeches have been divided by day and correlate with each other.

In the kit, you will also find that each box/bag is labeled according to the day. We have tried our best to include all the supplies you will need for the project of the day. However, we request that you purchase enough of the following supplies, based on the amount of children you have:

- Markers
- Crayons
- Colored pencils
- Scissors
- Glue sticks

We suggest that you look over the project for each day ahead of time and attempt to create a sample project, so that children have a point of reference.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email us at info@kisakids.org. We would love to hear any suggestions, feedback, comments, etc. Please also send us any pictures you take.

May Allah (SWT) grant us all the shafāʿah of Imām Ḥusayn (a) on the Day of Judgment and allow us to uphold his message.

With Duʿāʾs,
Kisa Kids Publications

LESSON PLANS

Project #1: The Flower of the Prophet (s)

OBJECTIVE:

Children will learn about the lofty position of Imam Husayn (a) and how he was dearly loved by the Prophet of Islam (s).

SUGGESTED AGES: 5+

TIME: 40 Minutes

MATERIALS:

- Flower craft kit (https://www.orientaltrading.com/thumbprint-flower-sign-with-poem-craft-kit-a2-13629330.fltr)
- Sharpie markers
- Labels (printed on 2x4" sticky label paper)

PROCEDURE:

1. **SAY:** Salaamun alaikum everyone. We are gathered here tonight on the first night of a very important month. Who can tell me what Islamic month we have just entered? (Wait for answers.)

2. **SAY:** That's right. Tonight is the first night of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic calendar. This month is very important for the Muslims and lovers of Ahlul Bayt. Is this a happy month or a sad month? Can anyone tell me why? (Wait for answers.)

3. **SAY:** Yes, that is absolutely correct. The month of Muharram is very sad for the lovers of the Ahlul Bayt (a) because this is the month in which our beloved third Imam, Imam Husayn (a), was martyred, or killed, by the enemies of Islam. But he wasn't killed alone. Who all were with him? (Wait for answers.)

4. **SAY:** Yes, thank you for sharing. Imam Husayn's (a) family and 72 of his dear companions were killed alongside with him. And the women and children who were left were taken as prisoners. InshaAllah for the next ten nights, we will talk about some of the family members and friends who were killed and hear their sad stories. But tonight, we want to talk about Imam Husayn (a). Imam Husayn (a) was a very special and kind Imam. He was the son of Imam Ali (a) and Sayyidah Fatimah (a), and he was the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (s), who taught us about Islam and brought the Quran to us from Allah. Prophet Muhammad (s) loved his grandsons Imam Hasan (a) and Imam Husayn (a) very much. He always used to say, "Husayn is from me, and I am from Husayn." The Prophet (s) was very sad when he heard that Imam Husayn (a) would be killed in Karbala on the day of Ashura. In fact, he cried very much when Angel Jibraeel told him. Many people wonder why we spend so much time being sad and crying for Imam Husayn (a). But we can see that when we cry, we are following the sunnah, or traditions, or the Prophet (s). In another hadith, the Prophet (s) has said, 'The good and righteous boy is a sweet-smelling flower from Allah being sent to His servants, and my two aromatic flowers from this world are Hasan and Husayn (A). Why do you think the Imam is compared to a flower? What are some qualities of a flower? (Wait for answers.)

5. **SAY:** We've heard some great answers! Flowers are beautiful, they bring beauty wherever they are, and they make others happy. Our Imam, too, had a beautiful soul because he was a true servant of Allah. He brought goodness, beauty, and happiness to all those who were around him, and people loved being around him! Thus, we can see how Imam Husayn (a) was the flower of the Prophet (S). When we honor Imam Husayn (a), we're honoring that same Imam who the Prophet (s) called his flower. Today, we are going to make special flowers to remind ourselves of how important Imam Husayn (a) and how much the Prophet (s) loved him.

6. At this time, pass out a flower craft kit and hadith label to each child. Have them put together the flower by sticking the different parts in the correct order: the stems, then petals, then jewels. Then, they can use sharpies to color the hadith label and decorate their flowers. Have them stick the label on the bottom part of the flower.

Hasan and Husayn (A) are my two sweet-smelling flowers in this world.

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Project #2: The Mourning Birds

OBJECTIVE:

Children will learn how mourning for Imam Husayn (a) is a tradition found globally amongst all of Allah's creations, even animals.

SUGGESTED AGES: 5+

TIME: 40 Minutes

MATERIALS:

- Spring Bird Ornament Craft Kit (https://www.orientaltrading.com/spring-bird-ornament-craft-kit-a2-48_6745.fltr)
- Labels (printed on 2x4" sticky label paper)
- Sharpie markers or regular markers

PROCEDURE:

1. **SAY:** Salaamun alaikum, my dear brothers and sisters. We have gathered again for a second night to remember Imam Husayn (a) and his family and companions who gave their lives in Karbala. Can anyone tell me what this gathering is called in Arabic? (Wait for answers).

2. **SAY:** Yes, that's right. This gathering is called a majlis. Majlis just means any gathering, but we normally use that word for a gathering where we cry, learn about, and remember the Ahlul Bayt (a). This act of crying and remembering the sad stories of Imam Husayn (a) is called "mourning" in English. Normally, we mourn when someone dies. Last night, we learned that one of the reasons we mourn for Imam Husayn (a) year after year is because the Prophet (s) loved him very much and also mourned for what would happen to his dear grandson. But did you know that the Prophet (s) was not the only one who mourned for Imam Husayn (a)? We have in our ahadith that all the Prophets (a) also mourned for Imam Husayn (a). In fact, many of the prophets, such as Prophet Musa (a), Prophet Nuh (a), and Prophet Ibrahim (a) passed through the land of Karbala, and when they stepped foot there, they suddenly felt grief and sadness. When they asked Allah why they felt this way in this land, he told them what would happen many years later to Imam Husayn (a) and his army. When they heard this, they began crying and mourning for Imam Husayn (a) as well. So, you see, all the Prophets mourned for Imam Husayn (a), which is why majaalis are held for Imam Husayn (a) all across the globe in all different languages, so that everyone can remember him and learn from his sacrifice and how he saved Islam. But wait, there's more! In addition to the millions of people who mourn for Imam Husayn (a), even the animals mourn for him! According to one hadith, Imam Ali (a) told his companions that, "Everything, including the wild beasts of the forests, the fish of the oceans, and the birds, shall cry for him." And in another hadith, a companion of Imam as-Sadiq (a) says that he was seated in the house of Imam Jafar as-Sadiq (a), when he saw a pigeon humming a lot. The Imam (a) looked towards his companion and asked, "Do you know what this bird is saying?" His companion said that he did not. Then, the Imam (a) said, "It is asking Allah to remove his kindness from the murderers of Imam Husayn (a). So, you should keep these birds safe in your houses." SubhaanAllah! Even the animals understood the greatness of Imam Husayn's sacrifice! This is because if the Imam (a) didn't sacrifice his life in Karbala, we would not have the truth and guidance we have today. Islam would be lost. So, we all honor him for saving Islam and thank him for allowing the truth and guidance to reach us today.

3. **SAY:** Today, we are going to make our own birds that mourn for Imam Husayn (a) so that we can keep them in our homes, just like the hadith of Imam as-Sadiq (a) tells us.

4. At this time, give each child a bird craft kit. Demonstrate how to put the bird together, step-by-step.

5. When children are done creating their birds, give them a label, which they can color and then stick onto their birds.

Even the birds mourn for Imam Husayn (A)

Even the birds mourn for Imam Husayn (A)

Even the birds mourn for Imam Husayn (A)

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Even the birds mourn for Imam Husayn (A)

Project #3: Faith Bracelets

OBJECTIVE:

Children will learn the importance of strengthening our faith and how the effects of strong faith manifests in our actions.

SUGGESTED AGES: 5+

TIME: 25 Minutes

MATERIALS:

- DIY Wood Bangles (https://www.orientaltrading.com/diy-unfinished-wood-bangle-bracelets-a2-13727686.fltr?)
- Sharpie markers

PROCEDURE:

1. **SAY:** Salaamun alaikum everyone! Alhamdulillah, we thank Allah for allowing us to come together once again to mourn for and remember our beloved Imam Husayn (a). As we've learned the last two nights, we remember Imam Husayn (a) for his sacrifices and dedication to Islam. What do you think led Imam Husayn (a) and his family and companions to go to Karbala and sacrifice their lives and everything they loved for Imam Husayn (a)? (Wait for answers.)

2. **SAY:** Those are all excellent answers! The main reason that Imam Husayn (a) and his army were able to give up their lives for Allah was because of their strong imaan in Allah and the religion of Islam. Can anyone tell me what imaan means? (Wait for answers.)

3. SAY:That's right, imaan means faith. Our faith is what we believe in. Who can tell me some of the things we believe in? (Wait for answers.)

4. **SAY:** Great answers! Some of the things we believe in are Allah, the Prophets, the Imams, the Quran, and the Day of Judgment. All these things that we believe in are part of Islam, which is our faith. Our faith gives us strength to make good choices and perform good deeds. The stronger our faith is, the better our actions are! But how can we make our faith stronger, does anyone know? (Wait for answers.)

5. **SAY:** Thank you for sharing your wonderful thoughts! Our imaan becomes stronger when we learn about Islam, do good deeds, and stay away from bad deeds. Some ways we can strengthen our faith or imaan is my reading the Quran and performing those acts that Allah has made wajib on us, like praying salaah. Did you also know that remembering and crying for Imam Husayn (a) also strengthens our faith? So, as we're sitting here learning and crying for Imam Husayn (a), our faith is growing stronger and stronger. InshaAllah as our faith becomes stronger, the more good actions we can perform, and this will strengthen our faith even more! It's almost like a cycle! To help us remember the importance of having faith and strong belief, today we are going to make faith bracelets we can wear!

6. At this time, pass out a wooden bangle to each child. They can use sharpies to write FAITH on their bracelets and decorate them as they wish.

Project #4: Filling Our Hearts

OBJECTIVE:

Children will learn how we can live our lives like the lives of Prophet Muhammad (s) and his pure progeny, just as we pray for in Ziyarat Ashura.

SUGGESTED AGES: 5+

TIME: 30 Minutes

MATERIALS:

- Clear heart ornaments (https://www.orientaltrading.com/diy-clear-heart-ornaments-a2-13788745.fltr?categoryId=550055+1243)
- Colorful strips of paper
- Pens/pencils
- Sharpie markers

PROCEDURE:

1. **SAY:** Salaamun alaikum everyone! Alhamdulillah, we thank Allah for allowing us to come together once again to mourn for and remember our beloved Imam Husayn (a). During these nights of Muharram, in addition to holding majaalis where we learn lessons from and cry for Imam Husayn (a) and his companions, we also recite special du'as. One of these very special du'as is called Ziyarat Ashura. Raise your hand if you've ever heard this special ziyarah. (Pause as some students may raise their hands.)

2. **SAY:** Great! Ziyarat Ashura is a special ziyarah in which we say our salaams to Imam Husayn (a) and his family and companions. We also make some important du'as in this ziyarah. For example, we ask Allah to send peace onto Imam Husayn (a), and we also ask Allah to remove His mercy and kindness from the evil people who murdered Imam Husayn (a). Another du'a we make is that we can be included amongst the army of Imam al-Mahdi (AJ). But tonight, I want to talk about one special du'a that we say in this ziyarah. And that du'a is this:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اْجعَلْ مَحْيَایَ مَحْيَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

O Allah, make my life like the life of Muhammad and the family of Muhammad

3. **SAY:** What do you think this special du'a means. What does it mean to live our lives like the life of Muhammad wa aale Muhammad? (Wait for answers).

4. **SAY:** What excellent answers! Yes, in this special du'a we are asking Allah to give us the tawfeeq, or the strength and success, to make good choices, just like the Prophet (s) and the Ahlul Bayt (a) would make. We want to live our lives like them, and when we leave this world, we want to be strong Muslims who have strong faith. What are some examples of actions we can do in our lives so that they look like the lives of the Prophet (s) and his family? (Wait for answers).

5. **SAY:** Great answers! Helping our parents, being kind to the orphans, helping the needy, volunteering in the masjid or Islamic center, praying Salaah, reciting Quran, and being kind to others are all examples of good actions we can do that will help us live our lives like Prophet Muhammad (s) and his family. When our actions are similar to their actions, our hearts will be similar to their hearts — hearts of faith! Today, we are going to make hearts of good deeds. InshaAllah our hearts can all be filled with good deeds, just like the Ahlul Bayt (a)!

6. At this time hand out a heart ornament, 4-5 strips of colored paper, and a pen to each child. Ask them to write a good action they can do on each strip of paper. They can then fold up the strips and put them inside their hearts.

7. Then, hand out sharpies. Ask children to write the line from Ziyarat Ashura on the outside of their ornaments. Younger children can write the English, and older children can write both the Arabic and English. You may want to write this big on the board so they can easily copy.

8. Then, they can tie ribbon on the top and hang these up.

Project #5: Fish in Water

OBJECTIVE:

Children will learn the importance of establishing and attending masaajid and the relationship between a believer and the masjid.

SUGGESTED AGES: 5+

TIME: 40 Minutes

MATERIALS:

- Glitter fish mosaic craft kit (https://www.orientaltrading.com/glitter-fish-mosaic-craft-kit-a2-13768766.fltr?categoryId=550178)
- Hadith labels (printed on 2x4" sticky label paper)

PROCEDURE:

1. **SAY:** Salaamun alaikum everyone! Alhamdulillah, we are gathered here in the majlis of Imam Husayn (a) for a fifth night. As we've learned these past few nights, establishing and gathering in the majlis of Imam Husayn (a) to mourn and remember him is a sunnah of the Prophets, and people all over the world carry on this tradition. Where do we normally hold these majaalis? (Wait for answers.)

2. **SAY:** Yes, that's right! Some people hold majaalis in their homes, but usually, we attend majaalis at our local masjids or Islamic centers. The masjid is a very important place. When the Prophet (s) moved from Mecca to Madina, the first thing he did was build a masjid in Madina, called Masjid an-Nabi. In fact, even before he reached Madina, the Prophet (s) asked his companions to create a masjid that is in between Makkah and Madina. This masjid is called Masjid al-Quba and this is the first masjid ever built in Islam. When we visit the holy city of Madina, we can actually visit Masjid al-Quba! Does anyone know what color the dome of Masjid an-Nabi is? (Wait for answers.)

3. **SAY:** Yes, Masjid an-Nabi has a green dome! Can anyone name any other famous masaajid they've visited or heard of? (Wait for answers.)

4. **SAY:** What excellent answers! Masjid al-Jamkaran, Masjid al-Aqsa, and Masjid al-Haram are all some famous masaajid. Why do you think there are so many masaajid all over the world? And why did the Prophet (s) make sure there was a masjid as soon as he entered Madina?

5. **SAY:** Great ideas! A masjid is the gathering place of the believers and it is the house of Allah. When there is a masjid, all the Muslims have a safe space where they can gather, remember Allah, pray together, and build strong bonds. During the time of the Prophet (s), the masjid was used for everything! People went there to learn, they held events there, weddings happened in the masjid, people went there for help, and of course, they went there to pray. It was the center of the city. Many of you visit the masjid regularly, whether it is on Thursday nights for Du'a Kumayl, on Fridays for Jummah prayers, or during the months of Muharram and Ramadhan. This is where you get to learn about Islam and also spend time with your friends. Can you imagine if there was no masjid where you lived? How would you get to know the other Muslims in the area? This is why it is so important to establish masaajid in every city and also visit the masjid often. In fact, we have in a hadith that "A believer in the masjid is like a fish in the water." What do you think this hadith means? (Wait for answers).

6. **SAY:** Great answers! Just like you all said, a fish needs to be in water to survive. When the fish is out of water, it's very hard for it to survive. But when it's inside the water, it's happy and is able to breathe and live properly. Just like that, we Muslims are at our best when we are in the masjid. We need a masjid to live, be happy, and thrive. Today, we are going to create our own fish that live in the masjid!

7. At this time, pass out a fish mosaic kit to each child. Be sure to remove the crosses from each kit ahead of time. Students can create their mosaics and then stick a hadith label on their fish.

A believer in the masjid is like a fish in the water.

A believer in the masjid is like a fish in the water.

A believer in the masjid is like a fish in the water.

A believer in the masjid is like a fish in the water.

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A believer in the masjid is like a fish in the water.

Project #6: Tawakkul Magnets

OBJECTIVE:

Children will learn the importance of having *tawakkul*, reliance on Allah, and how Imam Husayn (a) had *tawakkul* in Allah.

SUGGESTED AGES: 5+

TIME: 20 Minutes

MATERIALS:

- Magnet craft kit (https://www.orientaltrading.com/all-things-are-possible-with-god-magnet-craft-kit-a2-48_7831.fltr?categoryId=550175+1967)

PROCEDURE:

1. **SAY:** Salaamun alaikum everyone. Alhamdulillah, we are able to come together once more in these important nights of Muharram. Tonight is the sixth night of Muharram, which means we have already learned five important lessons about Karbala. Tonight, we will learn a sixth lesson inshaAllah. A couple nights ago, we discussed how it was Imam Husayn's (a) strong imaan, or faith, that allowed him to sacrifice his life for Allah. There was another quality that Imam Husayn (a) had, which is called *tawakkul*. Does anyone know what *tawakkul* is? (Wait for answers).

2. **SAY:** Great guesses! *Tawakkul* means trusting Allah. When we have tawakkul, we know that Allah is the most Knowledgeable, the most Powerful, the most Kind, and He loves us! Therefore, it only makes sense that we try our best and trust that whatever happens is best for us. We trust Allah and whatever plan He has for us. Why do you think it's so important for us to have *tawakkul*?

3. **SAY:** Great answers! When we have strong *tawakkul*, it is difficult for anything to shake us. This means that no matter what happens, we keep trusting Allah. This helps us stay positive and get through the difficulties in life. We trust that Allah can make anything happen, so this keeps us going. We see that Imam Husayn (a) had a lot of tawakkul on the day of Ashura. In fact, there was something he kept saying on this day, maybe you've heard this phrase before. He kept reciting:

   رِضًا بِقَضَآئِهِ وَ تَسْلِيمًا لِاَمرِهِ

   I am pleased with Allah's plan and submit to His command.

4. **SAY:** How do you think saying this phrase helped Imam Husayn (a) on the day of Ashura? (Wait for answers.)

5. **SAY:** Good answers! Maybe by constantly repeating this phrase, Imam Husayn (a) reminded himself to have *tawakkul*. Maybe saying this helped him trust in Allah and carry out his responsibilities. It made even the most difficult things on this day, like watching his 6-month-old child being killed, more bearable because he trusted that Allah's plan was best and with His strength, Imam Husayn (a) would be able to carry out his responsibilities. InshaAllah we can also be like Imam Husayn (a) and have tawakkul and this will help us in our own lives when things are difficult. Today we are going to be making magnets to remember that we should always have *tawakkul* and trust in Allah!

6. At this time, hand out a magnet kit to each child and have them assemble their magnets. Assist those children who are struggling

Project #7: Du'a Journals

OBJECTIVE:

Children will learn about the concept of du'a and seeking their needs and wishes from Allah.

SUGGESTED AGES: 5+

TIME: 35 Minutes

MATERIALS:

- Prayer journal kit (https://www.orientaltrading.com/god-s-galaxy-vbs-prayer-journal-craft-kit-a2-13830029.fltr?categoryId=550175+1967)
- Sharpie markers

PROCEDURE:

1. **SAY:** Salaamun alaikum everyone everyone. InshaAllah you're all doing well. We are blessed, alhamdulillah, to be given the opportunity to gather for one more night to learn from and cry for Imam Husayn (a). Tonight, we want to talk about a very important act in Islam: du'a. Can anyone tell me what du'a is? (Wait for answers.)

2. **SAY:** Yes, great answers! Du'a is a way of talking to Allah and asking Him for our needs. In Arabic, du'a literally means to call out to Allah. There are different ways to make du'a. One way is by reciting the du'as taught to us by the Ahlul Bayt (a). Can anyone name any du'a that the Ahlul Bayt (a) have taught us? (Wait for answers.)

3. **SAY:** Thank you for sharing! Some of the du'as passed down to us from the Ahlul Bayt (a) are Du'a al-Kumayl, Du'a al-Tawassul, Du'a al-Faraj, Du'a, Simaat, Du'a Maqaarim ul-Akhlaq, and many more. In fact, there is a special book of du'as that were recited by Imam as-Sajjad. Does anyone know what this book is called? (Wait for answers.)

4. **SAY:** Yes! The book is called Sahifa as-Sajjadiyyah, or Sahifa al-Kamilah. In this book, there are many different du'as for different occasions. There are du'as for when you're sad, sick, happy, for your parents, for children, for your neighbors, for thanking Allah, and so on. Not only do these du'as help us talk to Allah, but they also help us learn a lot about our religion. Alhamdulillah, we're so blessed and lucky to have these treasures given to us by the Ahlul Bayt. InshaAllah we can take advantage of them and recite them often. But when you want to talk to Allah or ask Him for something, you don't always have to recite one of these du'as. You can just turn to Allah and talk to Him from your heart. In the Qur'an, Allah says to the Prophet (s):

   وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۖ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ

   And when My servants ask you about Me, [tell them that] surely I am near. I respond to the call of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. (2:186)

5. **SAY:** So, you see, Allah tells us that He is close to us and that we should call upon Him with du'a. He promises to answer us when we call upon Him and pray to Him. When making du'a, what are some things we can and should ask for? (Wait for answers.)

6. **SAY:** Good answers! We can pray for any of our needs and whatever we want. But it is always good to pray for others first! One time, when Imam Hasan (a) was a young child, he stayed up all night watching his mother, Sayyidah Fatimah (a), praying to Allah. He noticed that she prayed for everyone, all their neighbors and friends, and then she prayed for her family last. When the young Imam Hasan (a) asked her why she prayed for her family last, she responded:

   الْجَارُ ثُمَّ الدَّارُ

   First your neighbors, then your household

7. **SAY:** So, it is important for us to pray for all the believers and Muslims around the world — all those who are sick, poor, oppressed, unfairly imprisoned, and in hardship. Who are some people around us we should pray for? (Wait for answers.)

8. **SAY:** Good! We should pray for our neighbors, teachers, scholars, friends, community members, relatives, siblings, and parents. It is very important to pray for others, and then pray for ourselves. Today, we are going to make du'a journals. In these journals, you can write down a list of people to pray for. Plus, you can write down some of your own du'as also! Remember, Allah is the Most Kind, so there's no limit to how much we can ask from Him! Ask Him for all of your du'as — big and small!

9. At this time pass out a journal kit to each child. Help them put their journals together and then write their names on the front.

Project #8: The Waterbag of al-Abbas

OBJECTIVE:

Children will learn about the story of Hadhrat Abbas and his quest to bring water for the family of Imam Husayn (a)

SUGGESTED AGES: 5+

TIME: 30 Minutes

MATERIALS:

- Color your own collapsible water bottle (https://www.orientaltrading.com/color-your-own-african-safari-vbs-collapsible-water-bottles-a2-13830444.fltr?categoryId=550055+1604)
- Sharpie markers

PROCEDURE:

1. **SAY:** Salaamun alaikum everyone. Welcome to our 8th majalis in this month of Muharram. Every night of Muharram, we remember one of the shuhadah of Karbala. Different cultures remember different shuhadah each night. In some cultures, the 8th night is dedicated to remembering Hadhrat Abbas. Does anyone know who Hadhrat Abbas is? (Wait for answers.)

2. **SAY:** Good answers. Hadhrat Abbas was the brother of Imam Husayn (a). He was the son of Imam Ali (a) and Hadhrat Ummul Baneen. Hadhrat Abbas was very dear and beloved to Imam Husayn (a). He was also a brave, courageous warrior, just like his father, Imam Ali (a). This is why Imam Husayn (a) made Hadhrat Abbas the flagbearer of his army. Can anyone tell me what a flagbearer is? (Wait for answers.)

3. **SAY:** Yes, that is correct. In the olden days, when armies went to war, they would have flags to identify which army they were and what they represented. Each army had a flagbearer who would carry that army's flag. This was a very important and special job. It was so important that they always made sure that if the flagbearer was killed, there was someone else to take over the job right away. And a third back-up flagbearer in case the second person was killed. So, Hadhrat Abbas was the flagbearer of the army of Imam Husayn (a) in Karbala. Since he had such an important job, Imam Husayn (a) didn't want him to go fight. After all, he had to make sure to keep the flag up. So, Hadhrat Abbas remained obedient to his Imam, even though it was very difficult for him! But finally, one by one, the army of Imam Husayn (a) had sacrificed their lives, and only al-Abbas remained. He was so brave and courageous that Yazid's army were very scared of him. But Imam Husayn (a) still wouldn't let him go fight. Instead, he asked his brother to bring water for the caravan. You see, they hadn't had water in three whole days! Yazid's army had blocked their access to the river, so they had no way of getting water. The children were very thirsty and crying for water. So, Hadhrat Abbas set out to bring them some water. When the army saw him heading towards the water, they grew very frightened. They know how Hadhrat Abbas was a courageous warrior, so they moved aside and he was able to make it to the river. When he reached the Euphrates River, he took the cold water in his hands. He hadn't drunk water in three days either! He could have easily taken a sip, and no one would have been upset or blamed him. But instead, Hadhrat Abbas dropped the water. He remembered the thirst of his master and Imam, and the children, and he didn't dare to drink before he brought them water. So, he filled up his water bag and headed back to the tents. But he never made it back, because Yazid's army snuck up and attacked him from behind, cutting off both his arms and piercing his water bag with an arrow. Hadhrat Abbas died as a brave, courageous warrior, trying his best to quench the thirst of Imam Husayn's army.

4. **SAY:** Each time we drink water, we should remember the thirst of Hadhrat Abbas, Imam Husayn (a), and his companions and say the following du'a:

   صَلَوَاةُ اللهِ عَلَى الْحُسَين وَ اَهْلَ الْبَيتِهِ وَ اَصْحَابِهِ وَ لَعْنَةُ اللهِ عَلَى الْقَاتِلِهِ وَ اَعْدَابِهِ

   May the blessings of Allah be upon Husayn (a), his family, and his friends, and may Allah remove His mercy from the killers and enemies of Imam Husayn (a)

5. **SAY:** To help us remember the thirst of Imam Husayn (a), Hadhrat Abbas (a), and all their family and companions, as well as their strong faith and self control, we are going to create our own water bags. We will write this du'a on the water bag so that we can remember to say it each time we drink water!

6. At this time, pass out a water bag to each child. They can color the front using sharpies. Then, they can write the du'a on the back. The younger children can just write English, whereas the older ones can write both Arabic and English. Be sure to write the du'a legibly and largely on the board so they can easily copy it.

Project #9: Thankful Mobile

OBJECTIVE:

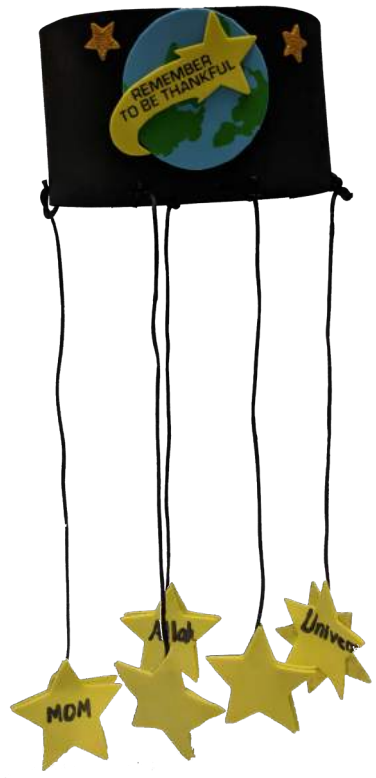
Children will learn about the importance of being thankful to Allah, even during difficult circumstances, and how thankfulness can increase our blessings.

SUGGESTED AGES: 5+

TIME: 30 Minutes

MATERIALS:

- Thankful mobile craft kit (https://www.orientaltrading.com/remember-to-be-thankful-mobile-craft-kit-a2-13831914.fltr?categoryId=550178)
- Sharpie markers



PROCEDURE:

1. **SAY:** Salaamun alaikum everyone. Alhamdulillah, we thank Allah for giving us the opportunity to be here another night to remember Him and His special servants. This is truly a blessing, shukran lillah! Does anyone know what that means? (Wait for answers.)

2. **SAY:** Good guesses! Yes, shukran lillah means All thanks are for Allah. When we want to thank Allah for one of the blessings He has given us, we can say shukran lillah. Can anyone tell me what else we can say? Hint: I said it in the beginning! (Wait for answers.)

3. **SAY:** Excellent! We can say Alhamdulillah, which means 'All praise is for Allah.' Both shukran lillah and Alhamdulillah are phrases we use to thank Allah for His many, many blessings. Why is it so important for us to thank Allah all the time? (Wait for answers.)

4. **SAY:** That's right. We are all so blessed, Alhamdulillah. Allah has given us so many blessings, so we should show our appreciation to thank Him. Imagine that someone gives you a special gift. You open it and find a toy that you've been wanting for a really long time. You become so happy, what do you do next?! You thank that person, right? Because you're so happy and want to show them how grateful you are for that special gift. Well, Allah is giving us gifts every single day, and even every single minute! Aren't we breathing every second? And don't we need to breathe to live? So, really, every single breath is a gift from Allah. Alhamdulillah! And did you know that when we thank Allah for His blessings, He actually gives us MORE gifts?! Does anyone know an ayah of the Quran that tells us this? (Wait for answers.)

5. **SAY:** Good! The ayah of the Quran that tells us this is from Surah Ibrahim, Verse 7:

   لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ

   If you are grateful, I will give you more (14:7)

6. **SAY:** So, this ayah tells us that thanking Allah actually increases our blessings. SubhanAllah, Allah is so kind! This is why we see the Ahlul Bayt (a) were in a constant state of thankfulness and gratitude to Allah. They were always thanking Him. And in fact, as Imam as-Sajjad (a) stated in one of his du'as, when he would thank Allah, he would have to thank Allah for giving him the ability to thank Him. Because having the tawfeeq to thank Allah is a blessing in it of itself. So it's like we have to say thank you that we can say thank you! We see that in the last moments of his life, Imam Husayn (a) was busy thanking Allah. He had just lost his companions, cousins, brothers, nephews, and sons, but still he was grateful to Allah. As we learned a few nights ago, he told Allah that he was content and pleased with His will. InshaAllah we can all learn to reach this level of gratefulness. To help us, today we are going to reflect on some of our blessings and create thankful mobiles that we can hang in our rooms.

7. At this time pass out a thankful mobile kit to each child and give them step-by-step instructions on how to put it together. Be sure to remove the crosses from the kits ahead of time. On the stars, children should write things they are thankful for. Encourage older children to think outside the box, beyond just parents or toys, and to truly ponder on their blessings. Perhaps they can consider blessings such as their access to education, Islamic knowledge, guidance to the right path, etc.

Project #10: Eyes of *Basirah*

OBJECTIVE:

Children will learn about the importance of being insightful and having *basirah*.

SUGGESTED AGES: 5+

TIME: 30 Minutes

MATERIALS:

- DIY Eye Masks (https://www.orientaltrading.com/diy-eye-masks-a2-57_60251.fltr?categoryId=550179)
- Sharpie markers
- Optional: beads, feathers, adhesive foam shapes, etc.

PROCEDURE:

1. **SAY:** Salaamun alaikum everyone. Tonight is the 10th night of Muharram, or the night of Ashura. Tomorrow is the day of Ashura, the day when Imam Husayn (a) and his companions and family gave their lives for Islam. Does anyone know how they spent this night of Ashura? (Wait for answers.)

2. **SAY:** Yes, that is correct. The caravan of Imam Husayn (a) was busy in prayer and worship on this night. If you were present in Karbala this night, you'd hear a buzzing sound coming from the tents. This buzzing was the hushed recitation of Quran, du'as, and prayers. Why do you think they spent their night in worship? (Wait for answers.)

3. **SAY:** Yes, that's right. Imam Husayn (a) and his companions and family knew that this was their last night on earth. They wanted to spend this night thanking Allah, asking for forgiveness, and seeking His help. On the other hand, Yazid's army was busy partying and performing haram actions. But you see, Imam Husayn (a) and his followers had something that Yazid's army didn't: they had *basirah*. Does anyone know what *basirah* is? (Wait for answers.)

4. **SAY:** Good answers. *Basirah* is insight, and it basically means that you are able to tell the difference between good and bad. Someone with *basirah* is someone who listens and ponders. They think about what they hear before acting upon it. For example, if someone tells you something, you don't automatically believe it. You first stop and think whether or not it is true. Secondly, someone with *basirah* looks at each situation carefully. They don't just do something because everyone else is doing it. And finally, a person with *basirah* takes lessons from history. This is very important because when we study history, we realize how we can make good choices. We see the mistakes people made and try not to repeat those same mistakes. One of our famous aalims has said that our mothers tell us stories at night to put us to sleep, but the Quran tells us stories to wake us up! When we read the stories in the Quran about the Prophets, we should try to take lessons from these stories and apply them to our own lives. Theses stories should open our eyes. When we look at the world like *basirah*, we will automatically make good choices because we will be able to see what is right and what is wrong. Lastly, someone with *basirah* follows Allah's rules and stays away from what He has made haram. This is because they can tell the difference between right and wrong. Tonight, we are doing to make our eyes of *basirah*. These eye masks will remind us about the importance of having *basirah* and to always look at things carefully.

5. At this time, pass out an eye mask to each child. Have them write "EYES OF *Basirah*" on their masks using sharpies. They can also decorate them how they wish. You may choose to give students decorative supplies, such as feathers, beads, etc. to also decorate their masks.

Project #11: Scrolls to Our Heroes

OBJECTIVE:

Children will form a connection and reflect upon the sacrifices of one of the shuhadah of Karbala, and then express themselves in a letter to that shaheed.

SUGGESTED AGES: 5+

TIME: 30 Minutes

MATERIALS:

- DIY scrolls (https://www.dickblick.com/products/roylco-rolly-scrolly-paper/)
- Pens

PROCEDURE:

1. **SAY:** Salaamun alaikum everyone. Today is a very sad day, it is the day of Ashura. This is the day on which Imam Husayn (a) sacrificed his life, along with his family and companions. On this day, we remember all of the shuhadah of Karbala. I want you to close your eyes and reflect on this day. Reflect on all those who gave their lives so that we could practice Islam today. So that we know what the truth is. So that we can make good choices. Alhamdulillah, we should be so grateful to these brave souls for all they did. Over these past 10 nights, we have talked about many of the shuhadah. I want you to pick one shaheed whose story particularly stood out to you. It can be any of the shuhadah we talked about, or maybe one you've heard about from your parents or in a different majlis. It's your choice. Today, we are going to write letters to our shuhadah. Your letter can say anything you wish. You can thank him for his sacrifice. You can tell him how you feel. You can ask questions. Anything you wish to say, you can write in your letter. We're going to be writing our letters on special paper. These are called scrolls. Back in the olden days, like 1400 years ago when the event of Karbala happened, they didn't have white paper like we do now. They used to write letters on big scrolls, so we will be imitating those scrolls.
2. At this time, pass out scrolls and pens. Give children time to write letters. Younger children can draw pictures, or dictate and have an adult write for them. When they are done, they can roll up and tie their scrolls with string. If some children are comfortable, they can read their letters out to the group, or you can post them up.

Project #12: "I Am" Poems

OBJECTIVE:

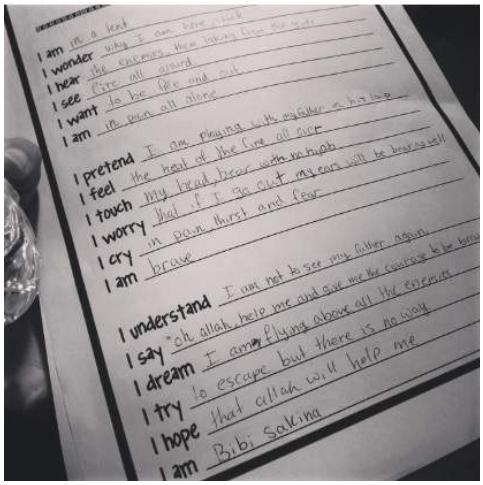
Students will learn about the level of knowledge of Sayyidah Ma'sooma, the sister of our 8th Imam, Imam ar-Ridha (a).

SUGGESTED AGES: 5+

TIME: 40 Minutes

MATERIALS:

- Paper template (suggestion: pre-fold the template for younger children)
- Pencils/Pens
- Markers/Crayons
- Scissors
- Glue/Tape (optional)
- Thicker paper (optional)


I am in a tent
I wonder why I am here alone
I hear the enemies from taking from the tents
I see fire all around
I want to be free and safe
I am in pain all alone
I pretend I am playing with a soldier in his tent
I feel the heat of the fire all over
I touch my head there with no hijab
I worry that if I go out my ears will be bleeding
I cry in pain, thirst and fear
I am brave
I understand I am not to see my father again
I say "oh allah help me and give me the courage to be brave
I dream I am flying above all the enemies
I try to escape but there is no way
I hope that allah will help me
I am Bibi Sakina

PROCEDURE:

1. **SAY:** Salaamun alaikum. My condolences to you all on this night of Shaam-e-Ghareebaan. Does anyone know what was described as the most difficult part of Ashura? Was it when Hur cut off the water supply? The moment Shimr sat on the chest of Imam Husayn (a)? When Imam Husayn (a) was beheaded (or say killed to be less graphic)? No, as difficult as those were, tonight is the night when the tragedies begin to peak. From tonight, the family of Imam Husayn (a) would become prisoners and taken from Karbala to Kufa, and from Kufa to Shaam. When Imam as-Sajjad (a) was asked what the most difficult part of the tragedy was, he replied, "Ash-shaam, ash-shaam, ash-shaam." The hardest part begins tonight. Hearing the stories we have heard the last 10 nights, we often say, "I wish I could have been there! I would fight alongside Imam Husayn (a)! I would protect the children and women! I would be there for Sayyidah Zainab (a) (a)." So, let's take a journey to Karbala, boys and girls. We will use our senses to immerse ourselves into what was the most difficult night for our beloved Ahlul Bayt (a). Close your eyes for me as we take our spirits to Karbala.

2. At this time, dim the lights and turn on the Nainawa soundtrack and have that playing in the background as you narrate the tragic events of the night. As you read this next part, really feel the emotions wash over you as you walk these children through the journey to Karbala.

3. **SAY:** We have landed in Karbala. The first thing we notice is the hot sand underneath our bare feet. We immediately look for shade, but there is no tree to cover us, no shelter to run under. You see tents in the distance and quickly start walking towards them. A heartbreaking sound stops you in your tracks. It is the sound of children and women crying, coming from the tents. The sound is so painful that your eyes begin filling with tears. All of a sudden, the sound of horses' hooves galloping across the hot desert sands drowns out the cries. The horses get louder and louder as they pass you by, heading straight for the tents. It is the horses of Yazid's army. The horses seem to be neighing in sadness as their owners yell and cackle, forcing them toward the tents with torches in hand. You yell out in protest as they begin setting the tents of the women and children in fire. Listen, children, as the tents begin to crackle and pop as they burst into flames. You scream to the family of Imam Husayn (a) to please leave the tents, but the women are not with hijab and will not leave. The screams of the women and children get louder as Yazid's army dismounts and begins pulling out the children and women forcibly. Listen to the sounds of the burning feet of the children running across the hot desert as they cry for their fathers and brothers. All of a sudden, you hear the sound of Sakina screaming as the evil soldier comes up to her and snatches off her earrings so hard that her ears begin to bleed.

   You look up into the sky, unable to believe what is happening. You see the sky is gray with anger, no light can be seen. You suddenly feel the smell of smoke entering your lungs. You begin to cough, noticing that the children are also coughing and crying as they huddle behind Sayyidah Zainab (a). The skies become darker, and it is as if the moon is mourning as it hides behind the dark clouds. The air is hot and heavy, it is as if the entire sky is crying for Husayn (a). You bend down and gather the sand under your feet. You feel the sand burning your fingers, and you know that this is the same sand the children and women will be dragged across on for hours as they are forcibly pulled towards the castle of Yazid. You begin to weep. O Husayn, do you see what they are doing to your family? Ya Husayn, Ya Husayn, Ya Husayn! Can you see the orange and red of the flames as they rise higher and higher? You see the women of Husayn (a) desperately trying to cover themselves as the soldiers drag them out without hijab. Somewhere in the distance, you hear the sound of a little girl calling out. It is Sakina, calling out to her father. Ya Husayn! Where is Sakina going? She is running away from the tents, heading into the battlefield! She finds her way towards the body of her father and falls onto it. She sinks into his chest, her own small chest heaving up and down as she cries and cries, telling him about all the awful things the soldiers have done to her. You look back to the tents and see Sayyidah Zainab (a), so brave and strong, gathering all the children, counting them once, twice. She notices Sakina is missing and runs back and forth, desperately looking for her. Look up, children, the moon has just come out from behind the clouds so that it can shine its light on little Sakina, and Lady Zainab (a) breathes out of relief as she runs towards the little girl who has fallen asleep on her father's chest in exhaustion.

4. At this time, ask students to use this visualization and the emotions they are feeling to write "I Am" poems from the perspective of someone who was present in Karbala — real or fictitious.

I am poem

I am _____

I wonder _____

I hear _____

I see _____

I want _____

I am _____

I pretend _____

I feel _____

I touch _____

I worry _____

I cry _____

I am _____

I understand _____

I say _____

I dream _____

I try _____

I hope _____

I am _____

SPEECHES

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرّحمَنِ الرّحِيم

وَالحَمْدُ لِلّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلاةُ وَالسَّلامُ عَلى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلينَ اَبِى الْقَاسِمِ مُحَمَّد وَ آلهِ الطَّيّبِينَ الطَّاهِرِينَ سِيَّمَا بَقِيَّةُ الله فِى الْاَرَضِين

Speech Structure and Guidelines

- Begin with the Duʿāʾ of Imām Mahdī (aj) (Duʿāʾ al-Faraj)
- Main speech
- Turn off the lights and turn on a few lamps as you begin the muṣībah
- Recite the salām to Imām Ḥusayn (a):

اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ابَا عَبْدِ ٱللَّهِ
وَعَلَىٰ ٱلارْوَاحِ ٱلَّتِى حَلَّتْ بِفِنَايِكَ
عَلَيْكَ مِنِّى سَلاَمُ ٱللَّهِ ابَداً
مَا بَقيتُ وَبَقِىَ ٱللَّيْلُ وَٱلنَّهَارُ
وَلاَ جَعَلَهُ ٱللَّهُ آخِرَ ٱلْعَهْدِ مِنِّى لِزِيَارَتِكُمْ
اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَىٰ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ عَلِيِّ بْنِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اوْلاَدِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اصْحَابِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ

- We usually recite the last 4 lines 3 times and dedicate them:
  - In hopes of manifesting the qualities we learnt about
  - For our parents
  - For the Imām of the time (aj)
- Recite the muṣībah
- End with a few duʿāʾs
  - "O Allah, please protect our ʿ*ulāma* (scholars) and parents." (Say Ilāhī Āmīn and encourage kids to repeat, so it slowly becomes a habit)
  - "O Allah, please give us the strength to always make good choices." (Ilāhī Āmīn)
  - "O Allah, please help us to become the close friends and helpers of Imām Mahdī (aj)." (Ilāhī Āmīn)
  - "O Allah, please protect all the children around the world and give them food and shelter." (Ilāhī Āmīn)
  - "O Allah please hasten the reappearance of the Imām so we can finally live as good Muslims in a safe world." (Ilāhī Āmīn)

Speech #1: Flower of the Prophet (s)

LECTURE OBJECTIVES:

- Children will learn that Imam Husayn (a) is the flower (gift) of this world to the Noble Prophet (s).
- Children will learn that loving and remembering Imam Husayn (a) is the way of all the Prophets of Allah.

LECTURE CONTENT:

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرّحمَنِ الرّحِيم

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلاةُ وَالسَّلامُ عَلى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلينَ اَبِى الْقَاسِمِ مُحَمَّد وَ آلهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ الطَّاهِرِينَ سِيَّمَا بَقِيَّةُ الله فِى الْاَرَضِين

Salaamun alaykum, my dear brothers and sisters. As we look around the room, we can see that many of us are dressed in black and other dark colors. That is because tonight is the first night of Muharram. Tonight, and for the next ten nights, we once again have come together to remember Imam Husayn (a) and the other shuhadaah of Karbala. We remember the difficulties they faced and their great sacrifices, and cry for them. We also remember the many lessons they have taught us and inshaAllah we hope to apply these lessons to our own lives so that we can become better Muslims.

Imam as-Sadiq (a) once narrated from Rasulullah (s):

عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنِ النَّوْفَلِيِّ عَنِ السَّكُونِيِّ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ ع قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ص الْوَلَدُ الصَّالِحُ رَيْحَانَةٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ قَسَمَهَا بَيْنَ عِبَادِهِ وَ إِنَّ رَيْحَانَتَيَّ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا- الْحَسَنُ وَ الْحُسَيْنُ سَمَّيْتُهُمَا بِاسْمِ سِبْطَيْنِ مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ شَبَّراً وَ شَبِيراً

A good child is a sweet-smelling flower that Allah has distributed among His servants. My two sweet-smelling flowers in this world are Hasan and Husayn. I named both of them after the grandsons from the Bani Israeel, Shabbar and Shabeer."[1]

From this hadith, we see that Rasulullah (s) loved Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn (a), so much so that he called them "sweet-smelling flowers of Allah in this world." This means that they were the most pleasant and lovely things in the world to him. Let's really try to understand this hadith. What are some qualities of a flower?

Well, flowers are known and admired for their beauty. Everyone loves flowers, whether looking at them from far or keeping them in their homes. The flowers spread beauty wherever they are. Another quality of flowers is that they always smell sweet, even in the most difficult times, like when they are crushed. Their sweet smell always remains.

But Imam Hasan (a) and Imam Husayn (a) are not just any flowers, the Prophet (s) says they are flowers from Allah. When someone we love gives us flowers, we not only appreciate the flowers, but also the person who gave us those flowers, as they are a sign of that person's love toward us. So, when we love Imam Hasan (a) and Imam Husayn (a), we should also be sure to thank and appreciate Allah, who placed them on this earth to be our role models. So, by comparing Imam Hasan (a) and Imam Husayn (a) to flowers, the Prophet (s) was trying to show us their great status. He wanted us to love and admire his

1 Al-Kāfī, Vol. 6, Ḥadīth #1

grandsons just like he did, and to realize that they were very special blessings from Allah.

LOVE OF IMAM HUSAYN IS THE REWARD OF PROPHETHOOD

Why is it so important for us to love Imam Husayn (a)? Why do we spend ten whole days — in fact, from now until Arbaeen — remembering and mourning for Imam Husayn (a)? Well, imagine this. Someone gives you the best gift you've ever gotten. You'd want to thank them right? You may even want to give them something in return. Well, isn't the best gift you've ever gotten Islam? And who brought this gift to you? Prophet Muhammad (s)! So what can you do to thank him and what can you give him in return? Well, let's take a look at what the Qur'an says:

قُل لَّا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ

Say [O Muhammad], 'I do not ask you any reward for it except the love of [my] relatives.' (42:23)

No other Prophet asked for any reward in return for their hard work. Only Prophet Muhammad (s). Isn't that surprising? What did the Prophet (s) ask for? Was it money? Gifts? No, nothing like that. It was something that is free, but of much value. It is the love for his close relatives, the Ahlul Bayt (a), which includes Imam Husayn (a). But guess what? This gift wasn't even for the Prophet (s)!!! This gift actually benefits us, so it's almost like we're giving a gift to ourselves when we love the Ahlul Bayt (a). Because when you love someone, you become close to them and you want to be like them. Don't we all want to be like the Ahlul Bayt (a)? By increasing our love for them and learning about their lives, inshaAllah we can become more like them.

When we look around the world in Muharram, and see how Imam Husayn (a) is being remembered in every single country, we can see how Allah is granting this wish of the Prophet (s). He fulfilled his request by instilling in the hearts of the people a great love for Imam Husayn (a). In fact, the amount of lovers grow every year. We see how people flock to Karbala every year on the day of Arbaeen in the millions, and this number grows year by year! Many of these lovers of Imam Husayn (a) walk to his shrine with their bare feet, some more than 100 miles, and more than 3 days, because of how much they love their dear Imam. In fact, some of these people aren't even Shi'a or Muslim! This shows us how Imam Husayn (A) isn't just an inspiration for the Muslims. No, he is an inspiration for all of mankind! But for Muslims, he is more than an inspiration — he is a role model who is to be followed in all aspects of his life. And true love of Imam Husayn (a) means that we have to obey Allah, because Imam Husayn (a) was the perfect obedient servant of Allah.

WHO WAS THE FIRST PERSON WHO CRIED FOR IMAM HUSAYN (A)?

Being inspired by Imam Husayn isn't anything new. Did you know that people have been remembering and mourning for Imam Husayn (a) since the beginning of time?

According to ahadith, the first human who cried for Imam Husayn (a) in this world was Prophet Adam (a). When Prophet Adam (a) gazed upon the Throne of Allah, he saw five names written on it. The Jibraeel came and told him to call on Allah by these names, Muhammad, Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husayn. When Adam reached the name Husayn, sadness filled his heart and he began to shed tears. Jibraeel informed him that this son would face a great calamity, a calamity that no one else will face. Prophet Adam (a) asked, "What is that calamity?" Jibraeel told him that he will be martyred –thirsty and alone– with a few companions. His thirst will be so severe that it will prevent him from seeing the sky. No one will help him, as even his family will be taken as prisoners. The enemies will slaughter him and his companions and take their heads to different cities. Then, Prophet Adam (a) and Angel Jibraeel cried like mothers who have lost their children.[2]

2 Biḥār al-Anwār, Vol. 44, P. 245

THE PROPHETS MOURNING FOR IMAM HUSAYN

When Prophet Noah (a) was sailing the ark, he reached a land that did not allow his ark to move forward. That land was Karbala. Fearing that the ship would sink, Prophet Noah (a) prayed to Allah and mentioned that he has travelled all over the world and has never been in this type of situation. At this time, the Jibraeel descended and explained the future of this land, Karbala. It would be the land that the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (s) would be martyred on by the most cursed of the seven heavens and seven worlds. At that moment, Prophet Noah (a) cursed the killers of Imam Husayn (a). Miraculously, the ark was released and reached a mountain top where Prophet Noah (a) and his party was able to find safety, saving them from the flood.[3]

According to ahadith, there are many other stories of the prophets of Allah mourning for Imam Husayn (a), including Prophets Ibrahim (a), Musa (a), and Isa (a). Therefore, honoring the martyrdom of Imam Husayn (a) is a tradition of the prophets of Allah. Imam Husayn (a) is the sweet-smelling flower and gift of Allah to Prophet Muhammad (s) in this world. We can take comfort knowing that our beloved Prophet (s) is the first person that sees us come to such gatherings of mourning, and that perhaps he would say to us — if we come with the right intention — "You have come for my dear son Husayn (a)! I am pleased with you, and may Allah be pleased with you!"

MUSEEBAH:

اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ابَا عَبْدِ ٱللَّهِ
وَعَلَىٰ ٱلارْوَاحِ ٱلَّتِي حَلَّتْ بِفِنَايِكَ
عَلَيْكَ مِنِّي سَلاَمُ ٱللَّهِ ابَداً
مَا بَقِيتُ وَبَقِيَ ٱللَّيْلُ وَٱلنَّهَارُ
وَلاَ جَعَلَهُ ٱللَّهُ آخِرَ ٱلْعَهْدِ مِنِّي لِزِيَارَتِكُمْ
اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَىٰ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ عَلِيِّ بْنِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اوْلاَدِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اصْحَابِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ

The beautiful flower of Rasulullah arrived in Karbala along with his holy family and companions on the 2nd of Muharram. The army from the most wretched of this world prevented him from going forward and encircled him. They stopped him and his family from having water, the most basic need of any human. What happens to a flower that is not given water? It dries up, and its petals begin to fall.

After his loyal companions are all martyred, Imam Husayn (a) is left alone to defend Islam and the truth. It is here that Angel Jibraeel had informed Prophet Adam (a) that Imam Husayn (a) would cry out:

وَا عَطَشَاهْ وَا قِلَّةَ نَاصِرَاه

"Oh, the thirst! Oh the few number of helpers!

With his extreme thirst, the exhaustion becomes so unbearable that Jibraeel tells Prophet Adam (a) that:

حَتَّى يَحُولَ الْعَطَشُ بَيْنَهُ وَ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ كَالدُّخَان

3 Biḥār al-Anwār, Vol. 44, P. 243

The thirst will become a barrier between him and the sky, like smoke.

How thirsty must Imam Husayn (a) have been that he couldn‘t see the sky anymore! What did they do to the delightful flower of the Prophet?! It wasn’t enough to let him die thirsty. No, the enemies of Islam encircled him. Our beloved Imam (a) was left alone. No one answered his calls for help!

فَلَم يُجِبْهُ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا بِالسُّيُوفِ وَ شُرْبِ الْحُتُوف

and no one came to help him unless with swords (against him) and to make him drink death

فَيُذْبَح

and so he was slaughtered

This is the calamity that the Jibraeel told Prophet Adam (a) about,

فَبَكَى آدَمُ وَ جَبْرَئِيلُ بُكَاءَ الثَّكْلَى

and so Adam and Jibraeel cried (together) like mothers that have lost their children.[4]

4 Biḥār al-Anwār, Vol. 44, P. 245

Speech #2: Mourning for Imam Husayn (a)

LECTURE OBJECTIVE:

- Children will learn that all of creation mourns for Imam Husayn (a).
- Children will learn that crying for Imam Husayn (a) is a beloved form of worship to Allah.

LECTURE CONTENT:

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرّحمَنِ الرّحِيم

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلاةُ وَالسَّلامُ عَلى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلِينَ اَبِي الْقَاسِمِ مُحَمَّد وَعَلى آلِهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ الطَّاهِرِينَ سِيَّمَا بَقِيَّةُ الله فِي الْاَرَضِين

Salaamun alaykum, everyone. We thank Allah for giving us the opportunity to come tonight to the majlis of our beloved Imam Husayn (a).

One day, Imam Ali (a) told his great companion, Maytham al-Tammar, about the sad incident of Karbala which would take place many years later. The Imam (a) informed Maytham that the Muslims would kill the grandson of the Prophet (s) on the day of Ashura, and that it would be a very sad day. He then told him that everything, including the wild beasts of the forests, the fish of the oceans, and the birds, would cry for his grandson.[1]

Imam Ali (a) taught Maytham al-Tammar about what would happen to his son, Imam Husayn (a), years before the event of Karbala took place. He also taught him that the martyrdom of Imam Husayn (a) is so significant that the entire creation will cry for him, including the animals, fish, and birds.

ALL OF CREATION GLORIFIES AND PRAISES ALLAH

For us to be able to better understand how different creations, such as animals, can cry for Imam Husayn (a), we must first understand that every object in this world has the ability to praise and glorify Allah. What does it mean to glorify? Well, think of when you do something really good, like when you make a really nice painting in art class and everyone talks about how beautiful your painting is and what a good artist you are. Your classmates are glorifying you! So, when we praise Allah, we are glorifying Him and stating all of His perfect qualities, as well as saying that He is free of all negative qualities. But we humans are not the only ones who praise and glorify Allah! There are many verses in the Holy Qur'an that tell us how that everything on this earth praises and glorify Allah.

We read in Surah al-Jum'ah that:

يُسَبِّحُ لِلّـهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ

Everything that is in the heavens and on the earth glorifies Allah. (62:1)

In Surah al-Anbiya, we learn that the mountains and birds remember and glorify Allah:

وَسَخَّرْنَا مَعَ دَاوُودَ الْجِبَالَ يُسَبِّحْنَ وَالطَّيْرَ

And We commanded the mountains to glorify [Us], along with Prophet Dawood and the birds. (21:79)

You see, all of Allah's creations have a basic understanding. They know and understand that Allah is the one who created them, and so they all thank Allah and glorify Him for all of His blessings. But if we don't hear them glorify Allah, how do we know they are doing this? Allah gives us that answer in Surah al-Isra:

1 'Ilal ash-Sharā'i, Vol. 1, P. 228

تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ السَّمَاوَاتُ السَّبْعُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَن فِيهِنَّ ۚ وَإِن مِّن شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَلَٰكِن لَّا تَفْقَهُونَ تَسْبِيحَهُم

The seven heavens and the earth and whatever is in them glorify Him. And there is not a thing except that it glorifies [Allah] with His praise, but you do not understand their [way of] glorifying. (17:44)

So, you see, because we can't understand what the birds and animals are saying, we don't know that they are glorifying Allah, but He makes this clear to us in the Quran.

MOURNING FOR IMAM HUSAYN (A) IS ALLAH'S GLORIFICATION

Now that we've learned that all creations praise and glorify Allah, how does this relate to their mourning for Imam Husayn (a)? You see, Imam Husayn (a) was trying to get everyone to be on the true path and lead them closer to Allah. He was trying to teach people what is right and wrong.

When the animals saw how the people killed Imam Husayn (a) rather than listen to him, they were crying because they knew these people were not following Allah's message.

You see, when we feel sad for what happened to our beloved Imam, we should know that we are glorifying Allah and worshipping Him. When we cry and mourn, we are joining the rest of creation, like the birds in the sky and the fish in the sea, who are also mourning for the Imam (a).

At the same time, it is important that we don't confuse crying for Imam Husayn (a) with worshipping Imam Husayn (a). We don't directly worship the Ahlul Bayt (a), because this would be shirk, which means worshipping something other than Allah. Crying over the Ahlul Bayt (a) to get closer to Allah is the worship itself. This is similar to other actions that we perform, like reading the Qur'an or being kind to our parents, as those different actions bring us closer to Allah. As Imam as-Sadiq (a) has said, "The sigh of a sad person who is mourning on our account is a form of tasbeeh."

Therefore, crying for the Ahlul Bayt (a) and performing their ziyarat is a form of tasbeeh and glorification, and this brings us closer to Allah, as these are actions that He has encouraged us to do. Surely, following Allah's advice would bring us closer to Him.

MUSEEBAH:

اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ابَا عَبْدِ ٱللَّهِ
وَعَلَىٰ ٱلارْوَاحِ ٱلَّتِي حَلَّتْ بِفِنَائِكَ
عَلَيْكَ مِنِّي سَلاَمُ ٱللَّهِ ابَداً
مَا بَقِيتُ وَبَقِيَ ٱللَّيْلُ وَٱلنَّهَارُ
وَلاَ جَعَلَهُ ٱللَّهُ آخِرَ ٱلْعَهْدِ مِنِّي لِزِيَارَتِكُمْ
اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَىٰ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ عَلِيِّ بْنِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اوْلاَدِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اصْحَابِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ

We discussed how all of creation, including animals, cried for Imam Husayn (a). But no animal loved and cried for Imam Husayn (a) as much as his horse, Dhuljanah.

Many scholars have narrated the returning of Dhuljanah to the tents in this way. When Imam Husayn (a) fell down from his horse and was martyred, his horse came neighing near the body of the Imam and kissed his holy body and smelled his body, while it was crying. Dhuljanah stained his mane with the Imam's blood and came back to the tents with his saddle hanging upside down. He came neighing and tapping his head against the earth around the tents.

Upon hearing the neigh of the horse, Sayyida Zainab (a) said to Sakina (a), "I think your father has come back and he has brought water. Go and welcome him!" But when Sakina (a) came out and saw the horse, she shouted "O Father! O Husayn (a)!" It has been narrated in Ziyarat al-Nahiya, which has been passed to us from Imam Mahdi (aj), "When the women and daughters saw the horse with its saddle has been upside down, all of them cried out as they hit their faces and despite their great honor, now they had to be captured by the enemy after the martyrdom of Imam Husayn (a), so they wailed and ran toward the place of the Imam's martyrdom."

Sayyida Zainab (a) then called out, "O Umar Ibn Sa'ad! They are killing my brother, while you are watching?"

Umar Ibn Sa'ad didn't answer. Imam Ali's (a) daughter turned to the soldiers of the enemy and said "Woe to you! Are there any Muslims amongst you?!"

Again, no one answered her. Shimr called the soldiers and told them, "May your mother cry for you! What are you doing? What are you waiting for?"

Then, they rushed from every direction and attacked the body of Imam Husayn (a) with arrows, lances and swords.

Speech #3: Imaan and Belief

LECTURE OBJECTIVES:

- Children will learn what the reality of belief is and how the occurrence of Karbala was the greatest test of belief.
- Children will learn how to gauge their own level of belief and be strong, like Imam Husayn (a) and his companions.

LECTURE CONTENT:

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحمَنِ الرَّحِيم

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلاةُ وَالسَّلامُ عَلى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلينَ اَبِى الْقَاسِمِ مُحَمَّد وَ آلِهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ الطَّاهِرِينَ سِيَّمَا بَقِيَّةُ الله فِى الْاَرَضِين

Salaamun Alaykum, my dear brothers and sisters.
May Allah bless you all and your families for joining us here tonight to remember and mourn for our beloved Master, Imam Husayn (a). From the life of Imam Husayn (a), we can learn many examples. One of these examples is the importance of having imaan, or belief. What does it mean to have imaan or true belief? Imaan is more than just believing in the Usool ad-Deen (Roots of Islam), although this is also important. In addition to simply believing with our hearts and minds, we need to live our lives according to these beliefs. Our actions should reflect our beliefs, which means we make good choices and stay away from bad ones. Having true belief is not always easy. Sometimes, it means making hard choices, because we know they are right.

ALWAYS CHOOSING THE TRUTH

One of the best ways for us to see how much imaan we have is by looking at the decisions that we make. When we are put in a difficult situation, that is when we are tested and our true imaan and belief shines through. Imam as-Sadiq (a) once said:

إنّ مِن حقيقةِ الْإيمانِ أنْ تُؤْثِرَ الحقّ وإنْ ضَرّكَ علَى الباطلِ وإنْ نَفَعَك

Surely, true belief is for you to prefer the truth that hurts you over falsehood that benefits you.

In this hadith, Imam as-Sadiq (a) teaches us that true belief is seen when one has to choose between truth and falsehood, right and wong. Of course, it can sometimes be harder to choose the right path. However, our imaan and belief becomes stronger when we learn more and increase our understanding. When we act on what we know, and make good choices, our belief grows stronger and stronger. The greater the test we pass, the more our inner belief shines bright like a light when we make the right decision.

Karbala is the greatest display of truth and falsehood. It is the reason that Imam Husayn (a) rose up against the oppressor of his time. He has said:

اَلا تَرَوْنَ اِلَى الْحَقِّ لا يُعْمَلُ بِهِ, وَ اِلَى الْباطِلِ لا يُتَناهى عَنْهُ

Don't you see that the truth is not followed and the falsehood is not discouraged?

Karbala was the fight between truth and falsehood. But doing what was right meant that Imam Husayn (a) would have to give up everything. It meant giving up his own life, his children, his loyal companions, and know that his family would be taken as captives. That is why Karbala was the greatest test, but also the greatest display of true belief and conviction.

Imam Husayn (a) and his companions passed their tests with flying colors. This is because people with imaan are the strongest of people during tough times.

Imam al-Baqir (a) has said:

المؤمنُ أصْلَبُ مِن الجَبلِ , الجَبلُ يُسْتَقَلُّ مِنه , والمؤمنُ لا يُسْتَقَلُّ مِن دِينِه شَىءٌ

The believer is firmer than a mountain, for the mountain can crumble, but nothing can separate the believer from his religion."

In another hadith, Imam as-Sadiq (a) has said:

إنّ المؤمنَ أشدُّ مِن زُبَرِ الحديدِ , إنّ زُبرَ الحديدِ إذا دَخلَ النّار تَغيّرَ, وإنّ المؤمنَ لو قُتِلَ ثُمّ نُشِرَ ثُمّ قُتِلَ لم يَتغيّرْ قلبُهُ

Surely, the believer is stronger than pieces of iron, for when a piece of iron enters the fire, it changes, but even if a believer were to be killed, then brought back to life, and then killed again, his heart would never change."

IMAAN IN HARDSHIPS

We will all face hard tests in our lives — it is the nature of life. The Quran clearly outlines that we will be given tests in life so that:

وَلِيَبْتَلِيَ اللَّـهُ مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ وَلِيُمَحِّصَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَاللَّـهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ

Allah may test what is in your chests, and that He may purge what is in your hearts, and Allah knows well what is in the chests. (3:154)

So, one thing we know for sure is that life will have its ups and downs. What is important is how we react to these tests. This is where our true imaan shines through. When things work in our favor and are going well, we should be grateful and thank Allah, and when they don't, we should be patient and still thank Allah.

Imam Ali (a) has said:

المؤمنُ شاكرٌ فى السّرّاءِ , صابرٌ فى البلاءِ , خائفٌ فى الرّخاءِ

The believer is grateful in times of prosperity, patient during hardships, and fearful in times of ease.

We can gather from this hadith that someone who has imaan, a believer, is patient even when life becomes difficult.

CONTROLLING OUR ANGER

Another sign of imaan is controlling our anger. As the Noble Prophet (s) has told us, "Certainly the believers are only those who when they become angry, their anger does not remove them from the bounds of the truth." This means that we should be careful about controlling our anger and channel it in the proper way. If we become angry, we should not do something that we know is wrong, like yell at others, such as our friends, and especially not our parents.

TESTING OUR OWN BELIEF

Therefore, if we want to check our level of imaan, we should use this measure taught to us by Imam as-Sadiq (a). We should test our commitment to choosing right over wrong in our daily lives. How much commitment we have to standing for the truth and doing the right thing shows the amount of imaan and belief we have.

Doing what is right means for us to follow the instructions that Allah has given us. Sometimes, doing what is right means completing our duties and responsibilities towards Him, such as obeying the halal and haram, or it may mean completing our responsibilities towards His creation, such as being respectful to our parents or other Muslims. Let's say, for example, our parents have told us we can only use the computer right now to complete a homework assignment. If they aren't looking, do we make sure we don't play games on the computer and only do as they have asked us? Or let's pretend you are on the playground. Your friends aren't being very nice and excluding someone from playing with you. What is your responsibility in this situation? Should you go along with everyone else or stand up for the person who is being excluded? It might be difficul, but this is when we must make the right decision so that we may be true believers.

We pray that Allah gives us all the tawfeeq to strengthen our imaan and become strong believers like Imam Husayn (a) and his beloved family and companions.

MUSEEBAH:

اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ابَا عَبْدِ ٱللَّهِ
وَعَلَىٰ ٱلارْوَاحِ ٱلَّتِي حَلَّتْ بِفِنَائِكَ
عَلَيْكَ مِنِّي سَلاَمُ ٱللَّهِ ابَداً
مَا بَقِيتُ وَبَقِيَ ٱللَّيْلُ وَٱلنَّهَارُ
وَلاَ جَعَلَهُ ٱللَّهُ آخِرَ ٱلْعَهْدِ مِنِّي لِزِيَارَتِكُمْ
اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَىٰ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ عَلِيِّ بْنِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اوْلاَدِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اصْحَابِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ

Imam Husayn's (a) patience on the Day of Ashura reflected his indescribable belief and trust that he had in Allah. We read in Ziyarat an-Nahiya that his patience shocked the angels. The same angels that complained to Allah when Adam was created were now amazed about what the son of Adam endured and how he responded to it. As we say in Ziyarat an-Nahiya:

قَدْ عَجِبَتْ مِنْ صَبْرِكَ مَلائِكَةُ السَّماواتِ

Indeed, the angels of the heavens were astonished by your patience.

It was at this moment, when Imam Husayn (a) was surrounded by enemies from all sides, weakened by wounds, that he would display his true belief in Allah.
He was all alone:

وَ لَمْ يَبْقَ لَكَ ناصِرٌ

And you had no helper remaining.

وَ أَنْتَ مُحْتَسِبٌ صابِرٌ

You were bereaved, yet patient.

But the test of Imam Husayn (a) did not only include the difficulties that he himself went through. The true hardship of a man is when he knows that the enemies will hurt his family and he cannot do anything to stop them. The sweat of death appeared on Imam Husayn's (a) forehead and he continually clenched and unclenched his hands. The Imam of our time (aj) describes the situation as follows, addressing his grandfather Imam Husayn:

تُديرُ طَرْفاً خَفِيّاً إلى رَحْلِكَ وَ بَيْتِكَ

You were secretly gazing upon your caravan and tents,

وَ قَدْ شُغِلْتَ بِنَفْسِكَ عَنْ وُلْدِكَ وَ أهاليكَ

while busy defending yourself and unable to be with your children and family.[1]

O Husayn, what hardships you went through, and yet you remained patient! Surely, in this great hardship, there is an example of true belief for all of us followers of Husayn (a).

1 Ziyārat al-Nāḥiyah

Speech #4: Living the Life of the Ahlul Bayt (a)

LECTURE OBJECTIVES:

- Children will learn an important line from Ziyarat al-Ashura
- Children will learn what it means to live a life like the Noble Prophet (s) and his immaculate progeny.

LECTURE CONTENT:

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحمَنِ الرَّحِيم

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلاةُ وَالسَّلامُ عَلى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلينَ اَبِي الْقَاسِمِ مُحَمَّد وَ آلِهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ الطَّاهِرِينَ سِيَّمَا بَقِيَّةُ الله فِي الْاَرَضِين

Salaamun Alaykum, everyone. We thank Allah for giving us the opportunity to come tonight to the majlis of our beloved Imam Husayn (a).

During these nights, we recite a beautiful ziyarat, known as the Ziyarat of Ashura, and in Ziyarat Ashura, we read this statement:

اَللَّهُمَّ اْجْعَلْ مَحْيَايَ مَحْيَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

O Allah, make my life the life of Muhammad and the family of Muhammad.

Naturally, when we hear those lines, we wonder, what is this life of Prophet Muhammad (s) that we want our life to be like? The Qur'an might be able to answer this question for us.

THE BEST ROLE MODELS

There is a beautiful verse in the Qur'an that states that "The Messenger of Allah, the Noble Prophet of Islam, is a perfect role model for you" (33:21). We have a lot of role models in our lives. Many of the people we love influence us, and we want to be like them. This can include our friends, our family, and our teachers at school. Sometimes, we end up talking like them, walking like them, or acting like them. But let's think for a moment, from all of these different people around us, who loves us the most? Of course, our parents love us the most. So, our biggest role models may be our parents. But what about our spiritual parents?

Did you know that the Noble Prophet (s) said, "Imam Ali (a) and I are the fathers of this nation?"[1] And in our time, the Imam of our time, Imam al Mahdi (aj), is the father of this nation. What does that mean? This means that out of everyone in our lives, the ones who love us the most are the Ahlul Bayt (a), and they are our greatest role models, so we should want most to be like them. But in order to be like them, we have to see how they lived their lives. How much do we know about the life of the Noble Prophet (s) and all the good things that he did? Because we want to look up to him and try to do those good deeds that he also did, but we can't do them if we don't even know what they are.

So, for example, when Prophet Muhammad (s) would talk to people, everyone would think that the Prophet was their best friend. Isn't that amazing? That when he would speak to someone, they felt like they were being listened to. He would face them by turning his body completely toward them, giving them a feeling of one on one attention. He would be kind to mean people, patient with everyone, and he would not raise his voice at others rudely.

1 Biḥār al-Anwār, Vol. 16, P. 95

So, one way we can live the life of Muhammad (s) means that we also try to be kind when we talk to other people. We should try to use a nice voice and tone when we talk to others. It means that maybe, when we speak with our friends, siblings, and parents, we spend an extra minute considering what we are saying so that kindness comes out of our mouths.

When we look at the life of Imam Ali (a), we see that yes he was known for his bravery on the battlefield, but he was also extremely gentle and kind with the orphans. He would spend time with them, and he would play with them so they wouldn't feel lonely. This is what it means to live our lives like the Prophet (s) and his family. It means I am brave against injustice, but at the same time, I also try to help those who need help. This is the way that Allah wants us to live.

We can look at each and every one of the lives of the 14 Ma'soomeen for examples of how to live our lives. Imam Hasan (a) was known for being generous. So, I can live my life like him by sharing my things with friends and my siblings. Or I can donate some of my saved up money to those in need, like the poor and orphans.

When we look at the life of Imam as-Sajjad (a), we see that he was known for the way he prayed and worshipped Allah. He prayed with so much passion and attention. So, I should also try to pray like him, too, and make sure to always present my needs to Allah by making a lot of du'a. Then, there's Imam al-Baqir (a), who was known for spreading knowledge. So, living the life of the Ahlul Bayt (a) means that I try my best to learn and do well in school so that I can be successful in my studies. Our 6th Imam, Imam as-Sadiq (a), was a very good teacher, so I can live my life like him by also teaching others, whether it be helping my classmates or my younger siblings. Then, there's Imam al-Kadhim (a), who was known for controlling his anger. This is a big thing I can do in my life to live like the Ahlul Bayt (a). When I get angry, I should try to control my anger and not lash out against others. Imam ar-Ridha (a) was given the title Imam ar-Ra'oof, the kind Imam. This was because he was kind to everyone, just as we should also be.

Imam al-Jawad (a), Imam al-Hadi (a) Imam Hasan al-Askari (a), and Imam Mahdi (aj), are all our role models, which means that we try to live like them and try to be like them.

HAVING TAQWA

Being like the Ahlul Bayt (A) ultimately means that we try our best to do good deeds and stay away from bad deeds, just as they did. We are careful about the haraam and halal.

Whatever Allah has said not to do, we don't do it. Whatever Allah says is halal and allowed, we say it's halal, and whatever Allah says is haraam, we say it's haraam. This is what it means to live like the life of Prophet Muhammad (s): to live a life remembering Allah, and thanking Him for everything He has given us by following the rules He has given us.

Following the rules of Allah means that we remember that Allah is always watching over us. If we remember Allah is watching, we remember Him, meaning we have taqwa, which is to be aware of Allah. Imagine if there is a camera at school, which is always monitoring us. If we knew this, we would be careful of our actions, right? This is because we know that our teacher or principal is watching. Well, we know Allah is always watching, so this should really change how we behave every single day.

Now, what if someone says, "Well hey, wait up, if I always have to be careful about what I do, then it's like I'm in jail! What if I don't like being told what I can and can't do?!" So, does having taqwa limit you or put you in jail? No, not at all. Having taqwa, being God-conscious and aware of Allah, like the Ahlul Bayt (a), protects us rather than limiting us. It's like we're building a fortress around ourselves. There is a difference between being in jail and being in a fortress. When you put yourself in a fortress, you are willingly secluding yourself. But to be in jail means you are locked in. The jail is locked from the outside, but a

fortress is locked from the inside. What does that mean? That means when you are in a fortress, you lock it because you don't want the enemies to come in. That's the meaning of taqwa — you lock the fortress so that shaytaan cannot get in. So, taqwa is not a limitation, it's protection.

So, taqwa helps us to gain Allah's protection for ourselves. That is why when you look at the lives of Ahlul Bayt (a), you see they had so much taqwa. Taqwa is a tool that can bring us closer toward living a pure life that is full with the remembrance of Allah. And we want to be like them; we want to be God-conscious people like them as well. May Allah help all of us to live a life like the life of Prophet Muhammad (a) and the family of Prophet Muhammad (s).

MUSEEBAH:

اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ابَا عَبْدِ ٱللَّهِ
وَعَلَىٰ ٱلارْوَاحِ ٱلَّتِي حَلَّتْ بِفِنَايِكَ
عَلَيْكَ مِنِّي سَلاَمُ ٱللَّهِ ابَداً
مَا بَقِيتُ وَبَقِيَ ٱللَّيْلُ وَٱلنَّهَارُ
وَلاَ جَعَلَهُ ٱللَّهُ آخِرَ ٱلْعَهْدِ مِنِّي لِزِيَارَتِكُمْ
اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَىٰ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ عَلِيِّ بْنِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اوْلاَدِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اصْحَابِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ

On the night of Ashura, there were so many people who were with Imam Husayn (a), but when they realized that the next day there would be a battle, many of them left. Only a few of the Imam's companions stayed, knowing that tomorrow, they would definitely be killed. Among them, there were those who were young and those who were old, and even some who had recently accepted Islam and become Muslim, like Wahb. There were even people from different races, different skin colors, and among them, there was an old man known as John. John used to serve Abu Dharr, a companion of the noble Prophet (s), and he was sent as a gift from Abu Dharr to the household of Imam Ali (a) and Sayyidah Fatimah (a). In the company of Imam Ali (a), he learned the tafsir of the Qur'an, the hadith of the Noble Prophet, and he memorized the entire Holy Qur'an by heart. When Imam Ali (a) was martyred, John stayed with Imam Hasan (a), and after Imam Hasan's shahaadah, he stayed with Imam Husayn (a). John was blessed to be with three Imams (a) — what a lucky and blessed man! And on the day of Ashura, he stood by the side of Imam Husayn (a). On the night of Ashura, John spent the whole night sharpening his sword while reciting the Holy Qur'an.

When the battle of Karbala started, the Imam's (a) friends took permission, one by one, to go to the battlefield and become shaheed. Finally, John went to Imam Husayn (a) and stood silently with his arms folded. Imam Husayn (a) looked at John and said, "John, my friend, what is the matter?"

John replied, "My master, I cannot bear to see any more suffering, I cannot bear to see the children of Sayyidah Fatima (a) get killed in front of me. Please, Master, allow me to go to the battlefield."

Imam Husayn (a) looked at John and said, "You are an old man; you don't have to go and fight." But John was determined to get permission, so he said, "Master, I know why you're not letting me go to the

battlefield. Is it because I am only a servant?"

Imam Husayn (a) was deeply shocked and upset to hear this. He comforted John and reassured him and said, "John, my friend, do not say that! You know that we, the Ahlul Bayt (a) do not see such differences. Go, John, may Allah be with you."

So, John went to the battlefield and fought bravely. Although John was an old man, he still fought hard. And maybe while he was fighting, he remembered how the Prophet (s) used to nurse Imam Husayn's (a) injuries. Perhaps he remembered the day when Imam Husayn (a) climbed on the Prophet's (s) back while he was praying salaah. Maybe he remembered his time with Imam Ali (a) and Imam Hasan (a), and John's eyes were full of tears. Finally, he was attacked with arrows from all directions, and he fell to the ground. As he fell from his horse, he cried out, "O my master, my salam and peace and blessings to you, please come to see me! Let me see your face one last time!" Imam Husayn (a) heard John calling him, and he rushed to the battlefield. As Imam Husayn (a) hugged and kissed him, John's soul was taken away to heaven.

When we talk about living the life of the Ahlul Bayt (a), John is a very good example. He lived a life like Muhammad and aali (the family of) Muhammad. There are many people like John today, in the region that he was born in. He was from Africa, and look at the people today in Nigeria who are trying to stand up against the oppressors. Look at a person like Shaykh Zakzaky who has inspired many people to become followers of the Ahlul Bayt (a). He is a good example of a person who has lived the life of Muhammad and aali Muhammad, just like John. Ya Allah, make all of us true followers of Muhammad and aali Muhammad, and Ya Allah, give us the tawfeeq, the blessing, to be among the companions of the Imam of our time.

Speech #5: Importance of the Masjid

LECTURE OBJECTIVES:

- Children will learn about the importance of attending the masjid and playing an active part.
- Children will learn about the value and significance of majaalis for Imam Husayn (a).

LECTURE CONTENT:

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحمَنِ الرَّحِيم

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلاةُ وَالسَّلامُ عَلى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلينَ اَبِي الْقَاسِمِ مُحَمَّد وَ آلِهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ الطَّاهِرِينَ

سِيَّمَا بَقِيَّةُ الله فِي الْاَرَضِين

Salaamun alaykum, everyone. We thank Allah for giving us the opportunity to come together to remember our dear Imam Husayn (a). On these nights, the masjids are filled with the lovers of Ahlul Bayt (a) who attend the majaalis of Imam Husayn (a). The masaajid play a very important role in our communities. They are the centers of unity — a unity that is based on religion, not based on the way we look, the way we speak, or the place where we are born, but based on our belief system and values.

So, let me ask you a question: what happens to a fish out of water? Can a fish survive outside water? No, it cannot. The fish needs water to live. There's a beautiful saying from Prophet Muhammad (s) that says:

المُؤْمِنَ فِي الْمَسجِد, كَالْسَمَكَ فِي الْمَاء

A believer in the masjid is like a fish in the water.[1]

So, just like a fish needs water to survive, we need to be connected to a masjid to survive. Everything about a masjid is important and holy, from the spiritual leader or shaykh of the masjid to the intention of the people who establish a masjid or attend the majlis. This is why we must respect the masjid very much. For example, even if our masjid doesn't have a policy against electronic devices, we, ourselves, should realize that it's disrespectful to use a device to play games or use social media during what is supposed to be a spiritual experience.

In order for a place to be called a masjid, it has to be specially set aside as a masjid. Once it is a masjid, it has special rules. For example, it is haraam to make it impure or it can never be destroyed. Since many centers in the west aren't able to do this, they are not official masaajid, but rather, they are Islamic centers. These are the closest places we have to masaajid in this part of the world. InshaAllah we can try to make our Islamic centers as close to actual masaajid as possible. So, whenever I mention some of the qualities of a masjid or how we can improve a masjid, we can also apply those to our Islamic centers, inshaAllah.

HAVING PURE INTENTIONS

Intentions are very important in our actions and everything that we do in life. For example, Shaykh Abbas Qummi has written many books, but there's one book that is very famous. That book is Mafatih al-Jinan. Mafatih al-Jinan is the book that is filled with beautiful duas and supplications that we read every day. Why is this book so famous? Because of the sincerity and the pure intention that this scholar had when he was writing it. A pure intention is relevant when we attend the center or masjid on a regular basis and try to establish a good connection with our community.

1 Fayḍ al-Ilah, P. 50

We go there for many purposes: to participate in jama'ah prayers, to make dua, and to attend the Friday prayer. In all of these different instances, we ultimately go the masjid to become a better believer. One way we can do this is by joining our parents for the speeches. Usually, listening to the speech can be a way of learning about Allah and the religion of Islam, which inspires us to perform our duties. It is important for us to also reflect on what we hear and ask questions when we aren't sure about something.

The masjid or Islamic center is a place where we can grow in so many different ways. It helps us to make good friends who help us become better Muslims and move closer to Allah, learn about Islam and other topics, and come together to worship Allah. Because the masjid gives us so much, it is very important for all of us and for the children to help in the masjid. We can help by keeping the masjid or center clean to serving food, or any other way we see that we can volunteer and help our center. Of course, we must make sure that we have our parents permission and guidance when volunteering and make sure that even while we are volunteering, we are doing it in a way that makes Allah happy and are extra careful of observing the bounds of halaal and haraam. During the months of Ramadhan, Muharram, and Safar, we see a lot more people come to visit our center. Perhaps during those times, we can try to be extra helpful.

THE MAJAALIS OF IMAM HUSAYN (A)

In Muharram and Safar, we come to the masjid especially for the majalis of Aza of Imam Husayn (a). These majaalis are extremely important! Imam Husayn (a) was martyred around 1400 years ago, but every year, the lovers of Ahlul Bayt (a) get together in Muharram and Safar to remember Imam Husayn (a), to remember the mission of Karbala, to remember why our Imam was martyred, and to remember what our responsibilities and duties towards the Imam of our time are. It is because of the majaalis of Muharram and Safar that the pure Islam and teachings of Islam are still alive today. In the majalis of Ahlul Bayt (a), you see many people crying. This is a very important action. Even the Noble Prophet of Islam (s) cried when he was given the news that Imam Ali (a) would be martyred, and this was 30 years before Imam Ali (a) was killed! These tears are very valuable, and Allah loves these tears. Tears are especially valuable when you cry for a good cause, like when you're asking Allah for forgiveness, or you see someone being oppressed, or most importantly, when you remember all the tragedies that happened to Ahlul Bayt (a). These tears help us connect with the Imam, and in turn, motivate us to change ourselves for the better so that we can become closer to and follow in the footsteps of our role models.

One of our great scholars, Ayatullah Mirza Jawad Tabrizi was a very famous ayatullah and marjah, but he would say, "I wish I had a beautiful voice so I could recite the museebah of Imam Husayn (a)." This was his only wish, because he knew how much reward there is to recite the majalis of Imam Husayn (a). Mourning is very important and valuable for many reasons. First, when we come to the majalis of Ahlul Bayt (a), we're expressing our love towards the Imam of our time (aj) and the Ahlul Bayt (a). When we shed tears, we should ask Allah for forgiveness so we can become better people and followers of the Imam of our time. During the majalis of Ahlul Bayt (a), you see hundreds, thousands, sometimes even millions of people getting together. Do you know any other place on the planet where year after year, 20-30 million people get together besides the day of Arbaeen of Imam Husayn (a) in Karbala?

The majaalis of Ahlul Bayt (a) are important because they are a means for us to connect with Allah. They are a place where we can recharge our spiritual batteries, which helps us make better choices. Everyone comes here for one reason and only one reason, insha'Allah: because of the love that they have for Imam Husayn (a) and his holy household. We also learn different lessons that are taught at the center during the majaalis of Imam Husayn (a). One of these is when Imam Husayn (a) said in history, "A person like me will never give allegiance to a person like Yazid." The Imam is talking to me when he said that and is saying that you and I living now should never give allegiance to a person who is like Yazid. So, we have to see who the Yazid of our time is, and we have to recognize them and make sure we don't give our allegiance to them by acting like them or doing haraam actions that Yazid would've wanted us to do.

The mourning of Imam Husayn (a), these majaalis, remind us that we have a responsibility towards the ones who are being oppressed by oppressors at this time. If you look at the world, you will see that there are a lot of children who are going through a hard time because the enemies, the bad people, are harming them, and we have a responsibility to remember these children and make du'a for them. The majaalis of Ahlul Bayt (a) help us remember and make du'a for the people who sacrificed everything they had so we could be Muslims today, and we have to be very careful that during these majaalis, we try to respect this by listening and learning from their stories. Two of these individuals who we remember are Aun and Muhammad.

MUSEEBAH:

اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ابَا عَبْدِ ٱللَّهِ
وَعَلَىٰ ٱلارْوَاحِ ٱلَّتِي حَلَّتْ بِفِنَائِكَ
عَلَيْكَ مِنِّي سَلاَمُ ٱللَّهِ ابَداً
مَا بَقِيتُ وَبَقِيَ ٱللَّيْلُ وَٱلنَّهَارُ
وَلاَ جَعَلَهُ ٱللَّهُ آخِرَ ٱلْعَهْدِ مِنِّي لِزِيَارَتِكُمْ
اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَىٰ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ عَلِيِّ بْنِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اوْلاَدِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اصْحَابِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ

Let's now take our hearts to Karbala, the land of patience and hope. Tonight, we want to remember two great shuhada of Karbala — two brothers named Aun and Muhammad. Aun and Muhammad were the sons of Sayyidah Zaynab and her husband Abdullah ibn Jafar.

When Imam Husayn (a) wanted to leave Medina, he went to Zaynab's husband, Abdullah ibn Jafar, to tell him he was leaving for Karbala. When Abdullah saw Imam Husayn (a), he began to cry and told him, "I know you are going to be alone in this path. No one will help you but yourself. I know that Allah will help you in all of these hardships, but people will have no mercy."

Abdullah ibn Jafar wished to go with Imam Husayn (a) like everyone else, but could not due to his old age and poor health. He could not walk without a cane and his back was bent. He told Imam Husayn (A), "Since I am so sick and cannot walk, I cannot help you, but I have two gifts for you. One is Aun (16) and the other is Muhammad (14). I have these two young soldiers; they can help you. Will you take them as my gift?"

Imam Husayn (A) cried out loud. He said to Abdullah bin Jafar, "O my brother, may Allah have mercy upon you. I know that you are my best friend and my best follower, and I know that you want to give me a gift, but I prefer that you keep them because you need them."

Abdullah bin Jafar came and said, "O Husayn, I cannot come with you. Please allow me to send my two sons instead."

Imam Husayn (a) accepted and the two young boys went with him to Karbala. On the night of Ashura, Imam Husayn (a) gathered his companions and gave them one final chance to leave. He said, “Tomorrow, there is going to be a big battle, and anyone who remains will become shaheed. Yazid’s army is not looking for you — they want me. If you want to leave and escape, you may go. I release you from your responsibilities.” He then blew out the candles and everything went dark. How kind was our Imam — he didn’t want to shame or embarrass anyone. He wanted to give them the chance to leave in the dark, so no one would see and they wouldn’t have to face him.

When Imam Husayn (a) said this, Aun and Muhammad stood up and began to cry. They said, “O Uncle, O Imam, how can we leave you alone and go on with our own lives? That is impossible!”

They made it clear that no matter what happened, they wouldn’t leave their Imam and uncle’s side. When Imam Husayn (a) heard this, he hugged his two nephews. What a blessing it was for him to have such loyal supporters!

On the day of Ashura, the two brothers fought bravely. Even though they were so young, they were on the battlefield defending their Imam for a long time. Alas, they were both struck and as they fell from their horses, they cried out, “Asalaamu alayka, ya Aba Abdillah!” When Imam Husayn (a) heard their call, he rushed to help them, but by the time he reached them, their bodies had been trampled by the enemy’s horses.

What must have been going through Imam Husayn’s (a) mind as he carried the bodies of Aun and Muhammad back to the tents? Maybe he was worried about his sister and how he would give her the news. Maybe he was thinking, Zaynab will be crushed to see her two sons like this. How will she control her tears?

But when Imam Husayn (a) brought them back to the camp, he saw that Sayyidah Zaynab was sitting inside her tent, not coming out. As soon as she heard Imam Husayn (a) crying outside, she rushed out and asked, “O my brother, why are you crying?”

He asked her, “O Zaynab, did you not hear the news of your two sons?”

Sayyidah Zaynab replied, “They were a gift from me and my husband to you, and they are now in paradise with their grandfather, Rasul Allah (s).”

What strength and faith must Sayyidah Zaynab have had. How much must she have loved her brother and Imam to sacrifice her only two sons in his way?

Now we must think and ask ourselves, what do we have to offer the Imam of our time? If Imam Mahdi (AJ) were to come and say, “Hal min nasirin yansurni — is there any helper to help me?” what will we have to offer? Will we be willing to give up our most prized possessions for our Imam? What will we sacrifice in his way?

Speech #6: Tawakkul

LECTURE OBJECTIVES:

- Children will learn the importance of having tawakkul, reliance on Allah.
- Children will learn that crying for Imam Husayn (a) is a practice of all creation.

LECTURE CONTENT:

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحمَنِ الرَّحِيم

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلاةُ وَالسَّلامُ عَلى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلينَ اَبِي الْقَاسِمِ مُحَمَّد وَ آلِهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ الطَّاهِرِينَ سِيَّمَا بَقِيَّةُ الله فِي الْاَرَضِين

Salaamun alaykum, everyone. We thank Allah for giving us the opportunity to come together for another night to mourn for our beloved Imam Husayn (a).

Has anyone here ever thought about what they want to be when they grow up? And have you thought about how you're going to get there? What is your plan to get there? You're probably going to need to finish high school, then go to college, and maybe even go all the way to get a Ph.D.! That is a very long process and involves a lot of hard work. Allah has given us our aql, or intellect, so that we can sit, think, and plan. This is important; we should try to always have a plan. But ultimately, things are not completely in our hands; they're only in the hands of Allah.

Let me give you an example. Have your parents ever had to replace a broken light bulb at home? They may grab a ladder, get a brand new bulb, go through the effort of installing it, but then one day, a storm causes an outage and the electricity will not turn on. So, no matter how much effort they put in, at the end of the day, the light bulb is not going to turn on. We have to plan, and we have to do our best, but at the end of the day, the results are in the hands of Allah. It is Allah who decides what happens and what the outcome is.

TAWAKKUL

You see, Islam teaches us that our job is to do our responsibilities and then leave the outcome in the hands of Allah. So, for example, if you have a test at school, it is your job to study really hard for it, but the results of the test are in the hands of Allah. So, can you go to an exam without studying at all, and then pray to Allah to give you good grade? No, it doesn't work like that. Allah has created a system. Or, if you do study, do you know for sure you're going to get a good grade? No. What if you go to the exam and you forget something that you have studied? So, what we need to do is try our best and at the end of the day, ask Allah for help and leave the results in His hands. Relying on Allah and trusting Allah is the beautiful concept of tawakkul.

There is a very, very beautiful hadith from Imam Ali (a), where he says, "I came to know Allah by all the plans that I made, where Allah's plans were different." This means that we realize that we can try our best to plan something, but something unexpected can happen to change our plans. For example, I have the perfect day planned to have a picnic with my family. I pack a nice basket with sandwiches and juice; we get our frisbees and volleyball ready. Everyone is dressed and ready to go. But then, out of nowhere, it begins to rain. We had everything planned, but something unexpected happen. In this scenario, I trust Allah because I know there is good in this for me and everyone else. This is what Imam Ali (a) means in this hadith. We also learn that we are not in charge and there is someone else in charge, because if we were in charge, things would always go our way.

Allah is the best of planners. For example, when the Prophet (s) was migrating from Mecca to Medina, the Quraysh were following him and planned to kill him. Did the Prophet (s) become scared? No, not at all. He had tawakkul and trusted Allah. So, what did he do? He hid inside the Cave of Thaur. Now, the Quraysh had tracked his prints and followed him to the cave. They were going to go inside and kill him, but what did they see? They saw a spider web blocking the entrance of the cave. They thought that there was no way the Prophet (s) could be hiding inside because he would have to break the web to go inside, so they thought they lost him and left. You see, it was Allah who commanded the spider to create that web after the Prophet (s) had entered. The Prophet (s) trusted and relied on Allah to take care of him, so even though the Quraysh had a plan and the best trackers, Allah had a greater plan, which is why He says in the Qur'an:

وَإِذْ يَمْكُرُ بِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِيُثْبِتُوكَ أَوْ يَقْتُلُوكَ أَوْ يُخْرِجُوكَ ۚ وَيَمْكُرُونَ وَيَمْكُرُ اللَّهُ ۖ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ

When the faithless plotted against you to take you captive, or to kill or expel you—they plotted and Allah planned, and Allah is the best of planners. (8:30)

Remembering the story during difficult times can help us when we are in a similar situation. Sometimes, it feels like there's no way out, but remember that Allah is the One who is in control, and when we trust Him, He takes care of us in ways that we cannot even imagine.

So, doesn't it make sense that when we want to do something, we rely on Allah, and we trust in the plan that Allah has made for us? Why should we do this? Well, you see, Allah is the most knowledgeable, so He knows how to help me. He is also the most Powerful, so He has the power and can help me. He is also the most Kind, so He loves me and wants to help me. So It makes perfect sense to trust Him and rely on Him. In fact, not trusting Him doesn't make sense! Imam Husayn (a) demonstrated the highest levels of tawakkul in Karbala. Despite all the hardships and tragedies he saw on the day of Ashura, he kept repeating the following phrase:

رِضًا بِقَضَائِهِ وَ تَسلِيمًالِاَمرِهِ

I am pleased with Allah's plan and submit to His will

He had tawakkul and relied on Allah completely, and Allah took care of him. Yazid wanted to get rid of Imam Husayn (a) and the name of Imam Husayn (a). The army of Yazid even rode their horses over the body of Imam Husayn (a), so that nothing would be left of the Imam, but look around today. After 1400 years, where is Yazid and where is Imam Husayn (a)? Where is the grave of Yazid? Look at the grave of Imam Husayn (a). How many people do you know named Yazid, and how many people do you know named Husayn? There are millions of people in all corners of the world with the name of Husayn. This is all because Allah said yes, I am going to make Imam Husayn (a) aziz, the high, and I'm going to make Yazid dhaleel, low. So, even though Yazid wanted to do something, despite his money and power, Allah still has the ultimate power to not let it happen.

TYING YOUR CAMEL

The concept of tawakkul can be summed up in one beautiful hadith from the Prophet (s) that says, "Tie your camel, and then trust in Allah." What does this mean? It means that if I have a camel, I shouldn't just leave it loose and trust that Allah will take care of him. No. I have to do my part — tie up the camel — and then trust in Allah to take care of it. So, what are we saying here? We're saying do your best, but leave everything in the hands of Allah. As long as I do this, it doesn't matter what the result is, because I know that I've done my responsibility, and this is what Allah wants for me. Study for the sake of Allah, help other people for the sake of Allah, try to do good deeds for the sake of Allah, and whatever happens, rely on Allah and trust that what He is doing is the best for you. Sometimes, you really want something to

work a certain way, and you try your best to make it happen, but it doesn't. There may be a reason for it, even though you don't understand that reason today. In this case, you have to trust the Best of Planners, because He has a plan and reason for everything He does.

Allah says, "Surely, Allah loves those who trust in Him." Trusting in Allah means that even though you may find yourself in a bad situation, you look to Allah and know that He is there. That is the concept of tawakkul, and all of us should try to have tawakkul by putting our trust in Allah fully. O Allah, write our names among those who are the mutawakkaleen, those who trust You.

MUSEEBAH:

اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ابَا عَبْدِ ٱللَّهِ
وَعَلَىٰ ٱلارْوَاحِ ٱلَّتِي حَلَّتْ بِفِنَايِكَ
عَلَيْكَ مِنِّي سَلاَمُ ٱللَّهِ ابَداً
مَا بَقِيتُ وَبَقِيَ ٱللَّيْلُ وَٱلنَّهَارُ
وَلاَ جَعَلَهُ ٱللَّهُ آخِرَ ٱلْعَهْدِ مِنِّي لِزِيَارَتِكُمْ
اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَىٰ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ عَلِيِّ بْنِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اوْلاَدِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اصْحَابِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ

Now, Let us take our hearts to Karbala. On the night of Ashura, many people ran away and left Imam Husayn (a). Eventually, he was left with only 72 companions. After everyone else left, Imam Husayn (a) began talking to his true companions and told them what was going to happen the next day.

He said, "Tomorrow I will be killed, and everyone who is with me will be killed and from you men, nobody will remain." There was a young boy sitting there, who was also listening and looking at the face of the Imam as he was saying this. The young boy was quietly wondering to himself, "What about me? Am I going to be martyred, too? What about me?" He was a person who had complete tawakkul and trust in Allah, no matter what that plan meant for his life. He knew Allah's plan for him was the best plan. This boy was the orphaned son of Imam Hasan al-Mujtaba (a), Qasim. They say he was around 13 years old.

When Imam Husayn (a) said this, Qasim asked, "Am I going to be killed tomorrow too, Uncle?"

Imam Husayn (a) looked at him lovingly and he said, "O my son, how do you see death?"

Qasim looked at his uncle and gave a beautiful answer, an answer that has remained in history. If you were going to die with thirsty lips, fighting with a brutal army on the burning sands of Karbala in such a tragic way, what would you say? What would you say, my friends? Qasim said, "It is sweeter than honey for me." Because he had trust in Allah, and he wanted to please Allah. The day of Ashura came, and the companions were martyred one by one. After the son of Imam Husayn (a), Hadhrat Ali Akbar, was martyred, Qasim wanted to go to the battlefield. At first, Imam Husayn (a) did not give him permission. Qasim had to beg his uncle to go to the battlefield. "Please Uncle, please, I beg you to give me permission to go and fight in the way of Allah." And Imam Husayn (a) said, "No, you're too young, and you are the

trust of my brother Imam Hasan (a).” Finally, Qasim eventually got permission to go. When he went to the battlefield, they say his face was filled with light and he said to the enemies, “If you don’t know me, I am the son of Hasan al-Mujtaba (a)! I am the grandson of your Prophet, Muhammad al-Mustafa (s)!” He fought very bravely and for as long as he could. Eventually, one of the enemies struck him and Qasim fell to the ground. As he fell, he called out to his uncle and Imam (a) for help. But the soldiers around him were trying to stop Imam Husayn (a) from getting to Qasim. At last, when Imam Husayn (a) finally reached Qasim, he looked at Qasim and with tears in his eyes and said, “I swear by Allah that it is so hard for your uncle that you call him but he cannot answer you and when he comes and answers you, it is too late because you have been martyred.” The name of this martyr, this young man, this young boy, remained in history for all these years because of his bravery, his love for his Imam, his tawakkul and trust in Allah, and the sacrifices he made. He has been made immortal by his words, which we should never forget. Qasim taught us that death in the way of Allah is “ahla min al-asal” — “sweeter than honey.”

Speech #7: Du'a

LECTURE OBJECTIVES:

- Children will learn about the importance of making du'a and seeking their requests from Allah.
- Children will learn about the methodology and some etiquette for making du'a.

LECTURE CONTENT:

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحمَنِ الرَّحِيم

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلاةُ وَالسَّلامُ عَلى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلينَ اَبِي الْقَاسِمِ مُحَمَّد وَ آلِهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ الطَّاهِرِينَ

سِيَّمَا بَقِيَّةُ الله فِي الْاَرَضِين

Salaamun alaykum, everyone. We thank Allah for giving us the opportunity to gather here again on these very important nights to remember our beloved Imam Husayn (a). Do you remember the last time that you made a du'a? That you asked Allah for something? Did you know that we all make lots of du'a every day? In our daily salaah, we are actually making a lot of du'as! For example, in the 6th ayah of Surah al-Fatihah, we say:

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

Guide us to the straight path. (1:6)

This is a du'a that we make ten times every day in our prayers. There is a very beautiful verse in the Qur'an that says:

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِى عَنِّى فَإِنِّى قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ

And when My servants ask you about Me, tell them that surely I am near. I respond to the call of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. (2:186)

So, when we call upon Allah, He promises that He will respond. Du'a, or supplication, is one of the best ways to get close to Allah. We have been highly recommended to ask from Allah for a lot through du'a. We should always be wanting something from Allah. Why? Because Allah is our Provider, the One who gives us everything. We could never survive on our own. So, if we aren't always asking from Allah, then it might be a sign that we are not thinking properly about our situation, or God forbid, a sign of arrogance because we think we are perfect and don't have any area where we need to improve. At the very least, we should pray that Allah keeps around those blessings that He has already given us, such as a healthy mind and body, family, friends, community, and our strong imaan and love for Islam. The Ahlul Bayt (a) would always have something to request from Allah, despite having so much. So, we should make du'a not just whenever we need help, but every day, because Allah loves when we connect with Him and ask Him for our needs. You see, when we ask Him, we acknowledge that we need Him, and this is one of the reasons why Allah created us.

Did you know that we are created in a way that everything about is calling upon Allah for help all the time? For example, every breath our body takes, it is with the hope that there will be some clean air that it can breathe that will provide it with the oxygen it needs. Every time we swallow food, it's with the hope that this food will be digested properly in our body and provide our body with the nutrients and energy it needs to keep on going. That's why even those people who don't believe in Allah with their tongues actually make du'a to Him every moment they exist — not a du'a that comes onto their tongue, but a du'a because of the way they were created, in need of Allah for everything, all the time.

WHY AREN'T DU'AS ANSWERED?

Now, sometimes we beg and pray to Allah for something and we don't get it. We feel so disappointed! But did you know that Allah loves us so much that He loves to hear us pray to Him? So, sometimes, when we are praying and haven't gotten what we wanted yet, maybe it is because Allah loves to hear the voice of someone who is asking Him for their needs and wishes. To help us create a better connection with Him, He waits a bit to answer our du'as. This is because Allah desires for us to be close to Him. He wants us to keep knocking on His door and asking from Him. Or it might also be the case that the thing we're asking for is actually bad for us. Remember, Allah is the Most Knowledgeable, so He knows what is best for us. We have to have tawakkul and trust that when Allah doesn't answer our du'a immediately, that means that either the timing isn't right or that He has something better in store for us. It's still important that we ask him, though, because even just the act of asking Allah and making du'a brings us closer to Him, and that is our ultimate goal in this life.

ETIQUETTE OF DU'A

When we make du'a, it can be at any time and in any way we like. We can pray to Allah in our hearts, or we can say it out loud. It can be sitting, standing, or in sajdah. But just as everything has a best practice or manner in which it should be done, there are some best practices or etiquette of du'a as well. Let's discuss some of these etiquette. So, the first thing we want to do when we make du'a is to begin in the name of Allah by saying, "Bismillahir Rahmaanir Raheem." We talked about tawakkul the other night, where we recite Bismillah when asking Allah for help. That "bi" of Bismillah is saying "Ya Allah I ask only You for help."

Another etiquette of making du'a is to call Allah by His beautiful names. The Prophet (s) taught Imam Ali (a) a special du'a called Du'a al-Jawshan al-Kabeer, which we usually recite in the month of Ramadhan. This du'a mentions approximately 1,000 of the beautiful names of Allah! So, we have so many beautiful names to choose from. We can use this du'a as an inspiration, and call upon Allah by one of His many names. Maybe if you're feeling scared, you can call upon Him by His name al-Mu'min, the One who provides safety. Or if you really want something, you can call upon Him by His name al-Kareem, the Most Generous.

An additional etiquette for supplicating, or making du'a, is to salawaat-sandwich your du'as. What does this mean? It means we recite a salawaat before and after our du'a. The reason for this is that salawaat is one du'a that will always be accepted since it means to send peace and blessings upon our beloved Prophet Muhammad (s) and his family. So first, we ask Allah to send blessings on the Prophet (S), and it's accepted. Then, we ask him for our haajaat, and then once again, we recite salawaat and ask Him to send blessings on the Prophet (s) and his family. So, the first du'a is accepted, the last du'a is accepted, and Allah is so Kind that insha'Allah the du'a in the middle, which is our wish, is also accepted. Of course, our du'as are only answered if they are good for us, or when the time is best for us. So, it may be the case that our du'a is accepted, but it may be delayed. Or it may be the case that what we ask for is actually not good for us, so Allah answers our du'a by giving us something better, whether that is in this life or the next.

When making du'a, it is also good for us to acknowledge that we're not perfect and can make mistakes. We should ask forgiveness for these mistakes and then repent or return to Allah. You see, sometimes when a person makes a lot of mistakes, that could be why their prayer is not accepted. Can you drink water from a glass that is dirty? No, of course not! First, you have to wash out that glass, and then you can fill it with clean and pure water. Similarly, we need to wash out our hearts with istighfaar, forgiveness, and tawbah, repentance, so we can then be ready to accept Allah's kindness and mercy.

Another etiquette of du'a is to pray for other people before we pray for ourselves. If we are only concerned with our own needs, then we are being selfish. We should always remember the needs of

others, especially those who have helped us in some way to guide us towards truth and goodness, those who are oppressed, and above all, the Imam of our time (aj). You all have heard that story, where young Imam Hasan al-Mujtaba (a) was sitting and watching his mother Sayyidah Fatimah az-Zahra (a) making du'a, and she made du'a for so many people before she made du'a for her own family. When Imam Hasan (a) asked his mother why she did that, she explained that first, you make du'a for other people, like your neighbors and friends, and then you make du'a for yourself and your family.

Another etiquette of du'a is that you sincerely believe that Allah will answer your prayer and that he can give you what you're asking for. This is called having husn ad-dhan, or a positive outlook of Allah. Husn ad-dhan is when you expect the best from someone, so when we have husn ad-dhan in Allah, we expect the best from Him and have hope and confidence that He will take care of us in the best way possible. It makes sense for us to have husn ad-dhan of Allah since He is the most Knowledgeable, so He knows what is best for us. He is also the most Powerful, so He can do what is best for us. And of course, He is the most Merciful, so He wants to do what is best for us. So, we should always have husn ad-dhan and expect that He will answer our du'as in the best possible way.

It has been said that one day, someone was standing next to the Ka'bah and holding onto the curtain, praying, "Ya Allah! Forgive me! But I know you're not going to forgive me." People were looking at him and wondering, "What is wrong with this guy? What kind of du'a is this?" So, they asked him about it, and he said, "Well, I was among the army of Yazid, and I was in Karbala when they killed Imam Husayn (a), and I know that Allah is not going to forgive me." But then he was told, "Your act of losing hope in Allah is worse than your act of joining the army of Yazid in Karbala. You should never lose hope in Allah! Always have hope in Allah!"

PLACES TO MAKE DU'A

So, these are some of the etiquette of making du'a. Insha'Allah we can try to incorporate some of these when we make du'a to Allah, and insha'Allah He will answer our du'as. But remember, whether our du'a is answered right away, or later, or not at all, we should remember that the most important thing is the act of making du'a. Allah might answer the du'a the way we have asked it. Or, He might look into our hearts and see what we really want and need, even though that real need may be different than what we are asking Him, due to our limited knowledge. Or, He may not give us what we want in this world and instead, in the hereafter, He could give us something much better. What's important is knowing that He has heard us. So, we should have a positive outlook and truly believe that Allah will answer our du'a, but at the same time, we should trust Him and not lose hope if our du'a isn't answered.

Another thing you'll notice is that many people cry during of after making du'a. If we are able to cry while making du'a, this is a good sign that our hearts are soft. Allah loves it when someone sheds tears and comes to His door. This is why sometimes, at the end of a museebah, reciters will make du'a. They know these du'as are more likely to be accepted when their hearts are softened and tears have flown from their eyes.

We can make du'a at anytime and from anywhere, but there are certain times and places where our du'as hold more weight and are more likely to be answered. For example, there are special nights, like Laylatul Qadr, where it is highly recommended to stay up all night and make du'a. We also have in our ahadith that du'as made in Karbala, especially under the dome of Imam Husayn 's (a) haram, are more likely to be answered. We pray that insha'Allah we can all journey and make ziyarah to Karbala soon. Ilaahi Ameen!

MUSEEBAH:

اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ابَا عَبْدِ ٱللَّهِ
وَعَلَىٰ ٱلا رْوَاحِ ٱلَّتِي حَلَّتْ بِفِنَايِكَ
عَلَيْكَ مِنِّي سَلاَمُ ٱللَّهِ ابَداً
مَا بَقِيتُ وَبَقِيَ ٱللَّيْلُ وَٱلنَّهَارُ
وَلاَ جَعَلَهُ ٱللَّهُ آخِرَ ٱلْعَهْدِ مِنِّي لِزِيَارَتِكُمْ
اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَىٰ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ عَلِيِّ بْنِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اوْلاَدِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اصْحَابِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ

The seventh day of Muharram is tragic for the camp of Imam Husayn (a) in Karbala. It is this day that the enemy soldiers have blocked access to the Euphrates River. It is this day that the words of "al atash!" or "the thirst!" begin to be spoken from the dry lips of the children of Bani Hashim. It is this day that leads to the coming death of the thirsty child of Imam Husayn (a), Ali al- Asghar! It is this day that leads to the coming of Imam's best friend and brother, Abu Fadl Abbas (a). It is this day that Sakina/Ruqayya begins her journey of thirst and hunger.

Tonight, we want to remember a very special companion of Imam Husayn (a), who made a very important choice at a very critical time. On the 9th night of Muharram, the enemies wanted to begin the battle, but Imam Husayn (a) requested the battle to be delayed for one more day. Why? You see, one of the things he wanted to do that night was pray to Allah and read Qur'an. The privilege of being able to talk to Allah was so dear to Imam Husayn (a) that he wanted one more opportunity to worship Allah for one more night. But maybe another reason was because Imam Husayn was waiting for a special guest who was not in his camp yet. Who was this special guest? He was waiting for Hurr.

Hurr was the captain of Yazid's army. He was the one who stopped Imam Husayn (a) from going to Kufah. He blocked the path of Imam Husayn (a) with 1000 men and forced Imam Husayn (a) to go to Karbala. But Hurr had some very good characteristics in him, and one of those was the love and respect he had for Sayyidah Fatimah az-Zahra (a). And on the day of Ashura, when he had to make a critical choice, that love and respect really helped him.

The name Hurr means someone who is free, and Hurr lived up to his name — he freed himself from the fire of hell, and from making choices based on his desires instead of Allah's desire. You know, the events of Karbala teach us many lessons, and Hurr taught us a lesson and set an example for all of us. Hurr had to make a choice between heaven and hell on the day of Ashura, when Imam Husayn (a) was calling for help and no one answered him. Hurr was thinking to himself, "This is the grandson of the Prophet (s). This is the son of Sayyidah Fatimah (a). This is the Master of the youth of paradise. He must be on the right path. He is the truth." And on the other side is the army that he is serving.

So, Hurr has to make a choice: stay with the army of Yazid and do something that he knows is wrong — he knows killing Imam Husayn (a) is wrong. Or should he leave his job, leave his position, leave his title, and join the camp of Imam Husayn (a)? Should he choose glory in this world or eternal happiness in the Hereafter? And this was a very hard choice for this captain of Yazid's army to make. And he waited until

the last minute to make that choice.

At the same time, there was another person who was also faced with the same decision, and that was Umar ibn Sa'd, the commander of Yazid's army. Umar ibn Sa'd grew up with Imam Husayn (a) and knew him very well. But he also had to make a choice between killing Imam Husayn (a) and gaining the hellfire, but also receiving the glory of this world, because he was promised he would become the governor of Iran, or to leave that glory and join Imam Husayn (a). Umar ibn Sa'd made the wrong choice, and he ended up being the commander of the army that killed Imam Husayn (a). Until today, people curse him whenever they hear his name

But Hurr decided to leave the army of Yazid and the glory of this world. And Hurr chose heaven. He chose happiness in the Hereafter. He chose Imam Husayn (a). In our lives, there are many times when we have to choose between good and bad, halal and haraam, right and wrong, heaven and hell. At these times, be like Hurr — choose good deeds, avoid haram things, go for the truth, and choose to be in heaven.

So, on the morning of Ashura, Hurr went to Imam Husayn (a) and asked for forgiveness, because he was the one who stopped Imam Husayn (a) and forced him to come to Karbala. Remember, my brothers and sisters, it is never too late to ask for forgiveness. And of course, Imam Husayn (a) forgave him. Hurr said he wanted to be one of the first to fight and sacrifice in the way of Imam Husayn (a).

And Hurr went to the battlefield and fought very bravely. Many people in the camp of Yazid began asking, "What happened to Hurr? He was our captain. Why did he leave our side and choose to be with Imam Husayn (a)?" Hurr was a strong and brave man. He fought with courage, but eventually, he was injured and fell from his horse.

In the last moments of his life, he wished that Imam Husayn (a) would come to his side and he could see his face once more, but he wasn't sure whether Imam Husayn (a)would come or not. After all, he was the one who forced Imam Husayn (a) and his family to come to Karbala. But suddenly, he felt a kind hand holding up his head. He opened his eyes and saw the beautiful face of Imam Husayn (a). Yes, Imam Husayn (a) placed the head of Hurr in his lap and said, "You were named by your mother as Hurr, meaning free. Hurr, you are truly a free person, true to your namesake. You are free in this world and in the hereafter!"

It's a very good du'a for us to make that in the last moments of our life, the Imam of our time is looking at us and praying for us. Imam Husayn (a) was praying for Hurr, that Allah forgive him, and Hurr became the famous martyr of Karbala. But if he had made the wrong choice, like Umar ibn Sa'd, he would have been someone people would curse for hundreds of years. We ask Allah to bless us and help us to make the right choices at those critical moments in our lives, and that Hurr be a source of inspiration and motivation for all of us.

Speech #8: True Courage

LECTURE OBJECTIVES:

- Children will learn what true courage is, by analyzing the example of Hadhrat Abbas (a).
- Children will learn about the three types of courage.

LECTURE CONTENT:

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحمَنِ الرَّحِيم

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلاةُ وَالسَّلامُ عَلى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلينَ اَبِي الْقَاسِمِ مُحَمَّد وَ آلِهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ الطَّاهِرِينَ سِيَّمَا بَقِيَّةُ الله فِي الْاَرَضِين

Salaamun alaykum, everyone. We thank Allah for giving us the blessing to come to the majlis of Imam Husayn (a) these nights and for sending us a special invitation to be here on this night. Tonight is a very important night, it is the night that is dedicated to a very important person who is loved by Allah, who is loved by Imam Husayn (a), who is loved by Imam Mahdi (aj), and who is loved by all of us, Abul Fadhl Al-Abbas (a).

Let's start by answering a question: what is the meaning of courage? Who is a brave person? What makes a person brave? There are different answers for this. Firstly, there is a difference between being strong and being brave. Someone may go to the gym and lift a lot of weights and have a lot of big muscles, so they may be strong, but that does not necessarily make them brave. Maybe this big guy goes to the battlefield, and as soon as he sees the enemies attacking him, he runs away with all of his big muscles. Even though he's a strong person with strong muscles, that doesn't make him a brave person. So, bravery and courage is different than being strong.

TYPES OF COURAGE

We can look at courage in three ways. One is courage in the battlefield, that when you face enemies, like Imam Husayn (a) and his companions did on the day of Ashura, you don't run away. Instead, you face death and remain steadfast in your fight. That's one type of courage.

The second type of courage is known as courage of character. This is when you want to do something, but you know this will displease Allah, so you have the courage to say, "No, I'm not going to do that." For example, you know you can eat pepperoni pizza at school and no one will see. But, you know this is against the rules of Allah, so you stay far away from that pepperoni! In this case, you have the courage of character. Saying no to something that you really feel like doing, just because you know Allah is displeased with it, is certainly a test of our character.

The third type of courage is related to your intellect and wisdom. This is when you have the courage to speak the truth. You know what is right and what is wrong, and you say, "I am not going to follow what is wrong, even though many people are doing it." For example, on the day of Ashura, there were many people in the army of Yazid, and it was easy for someone to say, "Well, all of them are doing it, so I'm going to do it too." But, no, a person like Hurr may come forward and say, "Even though all of you are doing something wrong, I have the courage to think, and based on my knowledge and beliefs, I know that this is wrong. So, I'm going to stand up against what's wrong and join what the truth by coming into the camp of Imam Husayn (a)."

There is one extra special person we all know of who had courage on the battlefield, courage of character, and courage of speaking the truth and using his intellect, and that is the person we remember tonight. His mother's name was Hadhrat Fatima Ummul Baneen and from his mother, he had three brothers, all of whom sacrificed their lives in Karbala. Yes, the man we remember tonight is Hadhrat Abul Fadhl a-Abbas. Before we talk about the qualities of Hadhrat Abbas, I want us to understand a very important concept in Islam. This concept has been mentioned more than 20 times in the Qur'an, and it is the concept of "the test of Allah."

TESTS IN ISLAM

You see, Allah is constantly testing us in life. But why does He test us? One of the reasons is so we can see our position for ourselves. Imagine that you have a hot drink. You're not sure if it's too hot to drink, so what do you do? You test a small bit to see if it's ready for you to drink or if you should wait a bit. Does Allah test us because he doesn't know what choices we will make? No, Allah knows everything, but it is we who do not know. One of the reasons that Allah tests us is so that we, ourselves, have the opportunity to see the choices we make. This is very, very important for us to understand. For example, imagine if someone says, "I think I'm very patient," and then that person falls down and gets a little scratch on their knee. Imagine they start screaming like they're going to die. Well, then we can say, "You thought you were patient, but look how you just reacted. You're not really that patient, are you?" They can then reflect on their actions and realize that they may need to improve on their patience.

So, one of the reasons for Allah tests us is to allow us to know more about ourselves and recognize our weaknesses. Now, different people react differently when they're tested by Allah. Some people, as the Qur'an says (70:20), exaggerate and make a big deal about everything. Even when the teeniest thing happens to them, they start screaming, "Oh my God! You pushed me [towards a trial], and I was about to die!!"

Then, there's the second group of people who are patient, and when they are faced with a challenge in life, they don't complain. They have sabr, patience. This means that they act according to their intellect, not solely based on their anger or desire. They also perform their responsibility when faced with this trial, which may vary depending on the trial. So, sometimes, this might mean that sometimes, instead of being quietly patient, you have to speak up, for example, if your life is in danger or someone is trying to harm you.

And then there's a third group, and these are those who willingly go through hardships. So, the second group didn't want hardships, but when the hardship was brought upon them, they were patient. The third group, however, willingly take on hardships and deal with these very well. This doesn't mean that they go out of their way to make their lives difficult. No, it means that when they see a hardship that Allah wants them to face, they do not shy away from that hardship. For example, if their responsibility is to speak out against injustice, and they know this will cause them hardship, they don't run away. They perform their responsibility and take on that hardship for the sake of Allah.

Hadhrat Abbas (a) falls into the third group. On the day of Ashura, it was Hadhrat Abbas (a) who willingly went and supported Imam Husayn (a) when he knew that there were a lot of soldiers protecting the water, and that they wouldn't let anyone even close to the water. He had the courage to say, "I am going to go and bring water for the children, even though I have to face thousands of enemies." He took on that challenge with bravery, even though his martyrdom was extremely painful. As we say in the ziyaarah of Hadhrat Abbas:

فَنِعْمَ الصّابِرُ الْمُجَاهِدُ الْمُحَامِى النّاصِرُ وَ الْأَخُ الدّافِعُ عَنْ أَخِيهِ الْمُجِيبُ إِلَى طَاعَةِ رَبِّهِ الرّاغِبُ فِيمَا زَهِدَ فِيهِ غَيْرُهُ مِنَ الثّوَابِ الْجَزِيلِ وَ الثّنَاءِ الْجَمِيلِ

What an excellent example you were, of someone who was patient, persistent, protecting, helping, a brother who defended his brother, one who answered the call to worship his Lord, the one who longed for the reward and rank that most people stay away from.

MUSEEBAH:

اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ابَا عَبْدِ ٱللَّهِ
وَعَلَىٰ ٱلارْوَاحِ ٱلَّتِي حَلَّتْ بِفِنَايِكَ
عَلَيْكَ مِنِّي سَلاَمُ ٱللَّهِ ابَداً
مَا بَقِيتُ وَبَقِيَ ٱللَّيْلُ وَٱلنَّهَارُ
وَلاَ جَعَلَهُ ٱللَّهُ آخِرَ ٱلْعَهْدِ مِنِّي لِزِيَارَتِكُمْ
اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَىٰ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ عَلِيِّ بْنِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اوْلاَدِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اصْحَابِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ

Today is the second day the water supply has been cut off. It is very hot in Karbala. The children cannot sleep. How can they? They're very thirsty and hungry. The sound of "al atash, al atash" breaks Imam Husayn (a)'s heart. What can he do? He is patient. For the sake of Allah, he is bearing it all, but more is to come. Imam Husayn's (a) patience and sacrifice will be tested further, tested with his brother Abbas (a).

Tonight is dedicated to one of the greatest shuhada: Abul Fadhl al-Abbas, the brother of Imam Husayn (a) and the uncle of Sakina. Let us begin with a story about Abbas (a).

At the battle of Siffin, people saw that Imam Ali (a) gave a young boy of 12 or 13 years permission to fight. Although young, he was strong, tall, and handsome. Seeing he was just a boy, the enemies thought they could defeat him easily. Around 30 to 40 people volunteered to Mu'awiya to go fight him, and Abbas defeated all of them.

From that point on, Abbas became known as the lion of the Ahlul Bayt. He was also known as "Qamar al-Bani Hashim" — the Moon of Bani Hashim (the Ahlul Bayt). Abbas (a) is the door to Imam Husayn (a).

Because Abbas was the bravest and most courageous, he was appointed as the commander-in-chief and flag-bearer of Imam Husayn's (a) army. When the enemies attacked on the day of Ashura, all the companions of Imam Husayn (a) were eager to get his permission to fight. Abbas was the first to ask for permission. Imam Husayn (a) told him, "No, you can't go. You are our flagbearer and the bravest among us. It's because of you that the children have courage and hope."

Abbas waited while the other companions fought one by one, each becoming shaheed. It was getting harder and harder for Abbas to wait — he was eager to fight, to do anything to help Imam Husayn (a)! When Imam Husayn (a) saw Abbas, he told him, "May my life be sacrificed for you, Abbas!" This shows what high a status Abbas had in the eyes of Imam Husayn (a) and Allah.

Our 4th Imam (a) has said, "Indeed, [my uncle] Abbas will have such a high status on the Day of Judgment that all the other shuhadah will be in awe and want such a status." Why? Because of his courage and dedication to Imam Husayn (a).

Abbas finally came to Imam Husayn (a) and said, “O my master, there is no one left. My chest is heavy — I want to help and do something.” Imam Husayn (a) still did not give him permission and instead told him “No, the children feel safe seeing you.”

Abbas saw the children were very thirsty. For three days, there was no water in the camp of Imam Husayn (a). The army of Yazid was spilling water on the ground in front of the children and feeding their animals water in front of them to make them more upset. Abbas talked to the children and told them, “Let’s go and ask Imam Husayn (a). If he gives me permission, I will go get some water.” Together, they went to Imam Husayn (a).

They all gathered around Imam Husayn (a) and said, “O Husayn, O Imam, please give Abbas permission to get water for us.” Seeing the thirst of the children, Imam Husayn (a) gave Abbas permission to go.

Abbas was happy to go. When he reached the river, he filled the container with water. He looked at the water and was about to drink some but stopped and threw it back in the river when he remembered his thirsty Imam (a) and the children waiting for him. He dropped the water and said, “No! How can I, when my brother, my Imam is thirsty?!”

Abbas began riding back to the tents. Maybe he was thinking, Finally, the children will get some water! Maybe Sakina was telling the thirsty children, “Don’t worry! My Uncle Abbas will bring water. Soon, we will quench our thirst!”

Suddenly, a man ambushed Abbas, cutting off his right arm. Ignoring the pain, Hadhrat Abbas switched the water-skin to his left arm. Again, the man struck, severing his left arm. Hadhrat Abbas had lost both hands!

But how can I return to the tents empty-handed? he must have been thinking. How can I look upon the faces of those sweet children and have nothing to offer them? I must go on. He was a warrior, and the children were his heart. He was not going to stop until their thirst was quenched.

Hadhrat Abbas now held the water-skin with his teeth, but the enemy knew no bounds. An arrow struck his mouth, piercing the water-skin with it, and water and blood trickled onto the weeping sands.

As the water drained from the water-bag, the hopes of the thirsty children drained with it. Suddenly, an arrow was shot straight into the chest of Hadhrat Abbas.

A tragic cry rang through the skies of Karbala, “O brother! Find me!”

Imam Husayn (A) raced towards Hadhrat Abbas’ voice and saw a flag fallen on the desert sands, drenched in the blood of his flag-bearer. He rushed toward it and fell to his knees next to the broken body of his brother. Laying Hadhrat Abbas’ head in his lap, Imam Husayn wiped the blood from his eye and face. The Imam (A) was so close to his brother that the arrow that was planted in Hadhrat Abbas’ chest had also pierced a hole in Imam Husayn’s heart.

Abbas was ashamed to go back to the children empty handed and asked that Imam Husayn (a) leave him there. When Imam Husayn (a) returned to the camp, the children came to him crying and said, “O Husayn, O Imam (a), we won’t ask for water anymore — we just want our uncle Abbas back.”

Imam Husayn (a) said, “O children, now you must be brave and prepare yourselves. Now that Abbas is gone, nothing will stop the enemies from attacking you.”

Speech #9: Thankfulness

LECTURE OBJECTIVES:

- Children will learn the importance of having shukr, thankfulness toward Allah.
- Children will learn different ways we can display our gratitude to Allah.

LECTURE CONTENT:

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحمَنِ الرَّحِيم

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلاةُ وَالسَّلامُ عَلى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلينَ اَبِي الْقَاسِمِ مُحَمَّد وَ آلِهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ الطَّاهِرِينَ

سِيَّمَا بَقِيَّةُ الله فِي الْاَرَضِين

Salaamun alaykum, my dear brothers and sisters. We thank Allah for granting us the blessing of attending the majalis of mourning of Imam Husayn (a). Our topic for tonight is the concept of shukr or being thankful. Have you ever thought about how many blessings has Allah given you? If you want to make a list of all the blessings that Allah has given you, how long would that list be? It will take you a very long time to make such a list because there are so many blessings that we know of and then there's some blessings that we're not even aware of. There are some blessings that we remember and some blessings that we don't remember. When was the last time that you woke up and you opened your eyes and said, "Alhamdulillah! Thanks to Allah that my eyes are working today!" What if you wake up one day and your eyes were not working?

When was the last time you said, "O Allah, thank you for giving us the Qur'an and Ahlul Bayt (a)," or "Ya Allah, thank you for giving me a tongue with which I can speak to other people," or "Ya Allah, thank you that I can swallow food." Did you know there are some people who cannot swallow food?

There are many blessings that Allah has given us that we take for granted. This means that we think they're always going to be there, but that is not the case. They may not always be there. So, if you think of all these blessings and you want to thank Allah, how many times would you thank Allah? 1,000 times? 10,000 times? 100,000? 1,000,000? 1,000,000,000, infinite?!

The daughter of Imam Husayn (a) teaches us how to thank Allah. Even after all the hardships she went through, she said, "Alhamdulillah, 'addad ar-ramli wal haṣaa" or "All praise is to Allah as great as the amount of pebbles and sand that exist in this planet." Wow, you cannot even count them — that's how many times we should thank Allah for all of the great things He has given us. There's a very beautiful supplication known as the supplication of Imam Husayn (a) on the day of Arafa, and in this du'a, Imam Husayn (a) thanks Allah for many things that we don't really pay attention to. He thanks Allah for the different parts of our body that help us breathe or hear, and even the different parts of our eye. Did you know that our eyes have many different parts, most of which we probably haven't even heard of? They have a cornea, pupil, iris, anterior chamber, posterior chamber, retina, optic disc, optic nerve, retinal blood vessels. Wow! There are so many different parts working in our eyes, and if one of them doesn't work, we will stop seeing. SubhanAllah, isn't that amazing? We should thank Allah for every single one of them. Did you know our eyes can see up to ten million different colors? SubhanAllah! And this is just one eye — think about all the different things that we have in our bodies for which we should be thankful to Allah.

FORMS OF THANKFULNESS

So, now that we're talking about being thankful, did you know there are three ways to thank Allah?

One is to thank Him in our heart by saying something like, “Ya Allah, it is You who has given us this eye and we thank You for that.” We can also be grateful with our tongues and by saying “Alhamdulillah” or “Shukranlillah.” The third way is to thank Allah with the different parts of our body. What does that mean? That means that we use our body parts in the way of Allah. Ya Allah, You have given me a tongue, so I will use the tongue in Your way — to say good words, not bad words, to recite the Qur'an, to read du'a, to recite latmiyya and nawhas. You have given me eyes, so I will use these eyes in a way that pleases You, not in a way that displeases You. For example, I will be very careful not to watch shows or movies that will take me away from Your path. I will study, I will read the Qur'an, and I will look at my parents with happiness. Ya Allah, You have given me hands, so I will use these hands in Your way by helping others. I will not use my hands to hurt other people. That’s the real meaning of being grateful. These are the three different ways of thanking Allah. Ideally, we should combine all of these together, and at all times we should have a feeling of gratitude in our hearts, be thanking Allah with our tongues, and use the blessings He has given us in ways that please Him.

The Ahlul Bayt (a) have many beautiful sayings about thanking Allah and being grateful. For example, the Qur’an tells us that if we are thankful to Allah, our blessings will increase. Or there’s a hadith from Imam ar-Ridha (a) that teaches us, “When you get a blessing from Allah, be thankful.” Remember what we said: if you’re not thankful, your blessings may go and never come back again. We also have a very beautiful saying from Imam as-Sajjad (a) that says, “Surely, Allah likes those servants who thank Him and are grateful to Him.” Imam Ali (a) teaches us that true thankfulness of any blessing is that we use that blessing properly, and especially make sure that we do not use that blessing in a haraam way, in a way that Allah has told us not to. We ask Allah that we are always among those who thank Him for His blessings and not amongst those who use His blessings in a way that displeases Him.

MUSEEBAH:

اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ابَا عَبْدِ ٱللَّهِ
وَعَلَىٰ ٱلارْوَاحِ ٱلَّتِي حَلَّتْ بِفِنَايِكَ
عَلَيْكَ مِنِّي سَلاَمُ ٱللَّهِ ابَداً
مَا بَقِيتُ وَبَقِيَ ٱللَّيْلُ وَٱلنَّهَارُ
وَلاَ جَعَلَهُ ٱللَّهُ آخِرَ ٱلْعَهْدِ مِنِّي لِزِيَارَتِكُمْ
اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَىٰ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ عَلِيِّ بْنِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اوْلاَدِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اصْحَابِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ

On the day of Ashura, Imam Husayn (a) sacrificed all his faithful friends, but remained patient. He sacrificed his family, but he remained patient. How much can Imam Husayn (a) bear? How much more can he sacrifice? My fellow friends, for the sake of Islam, our dear Imam Husayn (a) sacrificed the most precious thing in his life, his own son Hadhrat Ali al-Akbar. Tonight, we will cry more and do more matam. Sayyidah Fatimah (a) will cry with us. Imam Ali (a) will join us, Imam Hasan (a) and Imam Husayn (a) will cry along with us. Tonight is the night of the brave son of Imam Husayn (a), the life of Imam Husayn (a), the darling of Sayyidah Zainab (a). Tonight is the night of Ali al-Akbar ibn al-Husayn (a).

Tonight, we want to remember the loss of a son. But this son was not just an ordinary son. Ali al-Akbar was somebody who was extremely special. We're told that when people used to long for the Prophet (S), when they would miss Rasulullah, they would look at Ali al-Akbar. Ali al-Akbar — who was an example of the Prophet (S) in his speech, in his character, and in his looks as well. This statement is very important. Allah tells us in the Quran that our Prophet had the best of character. He was Rahmatul lil 'alameen — a mercy to the worlds — and siraaj an-muneera — a bright lantern to humanity. Ali al-Akbar had these same characteristics. He was somebody who was extremely good and pious. He was a light among the people. He was a great young man, and he was someone whom Imam Husayn (a) loved very dearly.

You all know how much a parent loves their child. Most people live their lives, and their parents pass away before they do. But when a parent has to face the loss of a child before they do, this is something that is extremely difficult for a heart to take.

Let us take our hearts to this heartbreaking scene. It was the day of Ashura, and one by one, the companions of Imam Husayn (a) give their lives, showing their bravery on the battlefield. Not a single one hesitated to serve the Imam of their time. But the companions were numbered. Finally, it came to a point where there were no companions left. The Ahlul Bayt (a) saw these acts of bravery one after another, but now their time had come to give their lives.

The first among them to say he wants to go to the battlefield is the son of Imam Husayn (a). Ali al-Akbar asks his father for permission to go to the battlefield. We are told that Imam Husayn (a) gives his son permission to go without any hesitation at all. But at the same time, as the father is watching his son turn away from him for maybe the last time, the eyes of our Imam (a) are filled with tears.

Why is our Imam crying? On one hand, he is content with the will of Allah. He knows that he must sacrifice his son, and that his son must be sacrificed in front of his own eyes; but on the other hand, he is a father. This is a scene of contentment with the will of Allah and compassion for very beloved son.

Ali al-Akbar is approaching the battlefield. Imam Husayn (a) cries out, "O Allah! Bear witness that there is a young man who is going forth who most resembles your Prophet in his looks, characteristics, and speech. Whenever we would wish to look to our prophet, we would look to him!"

Ali al-Akbar is facing the enemy army. He cries out, "Ana Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Ali — I am Ali, the son of Husayn, the son of Ali. We are, by Allah, more deserving to this right than anyone else. Do you not see how I protect my father?"

Ali al-Akbar is on his horse fighting the enemy army. It is one man against so many. Ali al-Akbar fights so bravely and so strongly. But after some time, there is a strange scene, one which has not been seen all day in karbala. The young man who is fighting suddenly begins returning back to his camp. Is he scared? Is he running away? God forbid that he would do such a thing! Is it that he is thirsty and tired? No! This is Ali al-Akbar. Brothers and sisters, if you had the chance to meet the Imam of your time before you died, wouldn't you do so? This is what Ali al-Akbar wishes to do. He comes to his father one last time and says, "O Father, the weight of this armor is so heavy! And my thirst is killing me. If only there was some way to get some water!" Imam Husayn (a) looks at his son. Imagine what a father would say to his son who is so thirsty, but he has no water to give. He tells him "O my son, be patient! Soon, you will meet your grandfather, who will give you a drink after which you will never be thirsty!"

After hearing this, Ali al-Akbar is recharged. He returns to the battlefield and fights for some time. But there is one man named ibn Munqidh (la'natullahi ʿalayh) who is determined to kill the son of Husayn (a). He prepares his spear, waiting for the right moment. He wanted to go down in history for being the first

killer of the family of the Ahlul Bayt (a) on the Day of Ashura. Alas, he throws his spear, and it hits Ali al-Akbar, who is thrown off his horse.

Ali al-Akbar cries out, “Ya Abata! Alayka salam! — O my father, I send you my salam! I see my grandfather— (that promise of Imam Husayn (a) has come true) — he has quenched my thirst and he is telling you hurry up and join us!”

Imam Husayn (a) is watching this scene. He hears his son, but now there is a whole army who has gathered around the body of Ali al-Akbar. They know who this young man is. They see the Imam (a) standing there, but O enemies, don’t you see that it is not just the Imam watching?! There is a lady who is also watching what is going on! Sayyidah Zainab (a) comes out and is watching what is happening to her nephew. O enemy, stop! Don’t do that! How can you do this to this young man, who so resembled the Prophet (S) that you claim to follow! Sayyidah Zainab cries out, “Ya habeebaah wabna akhaah! O my beloved one! O my nephew!”

Imam Husayn (a) goes to the body of his son and put his cheek on the cheek of his son as he cries out, “O life! You are not worth living after this!”

Speech #10: Basirah

LECTURE OBJECTIVES:

- Children will learn about the importance of having *basirah*, insight, and learn how to reflect and become more analytical, so they may view things deeper than surface level.
- Children will learn how to identify individuals who have basirah.

LECTURE CONTENT:

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحمَنِ الرَّحِيم

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلاةُ وَالسَّلامُ عَلى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلينَ اَبِي الْقَاسِمِ مُحَمَّد وَ آلهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ الطَّاهِرِينَ سِيَّمَا بَقِيَّةُ الله فِي الْاَرَضِين

Salaamun alaykum, everyone. We send our condolences to all the believers in the world, to all of you sitting here, and to the Imam of our time (aj) for this sad occasion of the martyrdom anniversary of our beloved Imam Husayn (a). The event of Karbala is a very tragic event because some of the best people that ever lived on this planet were martyred with thirsty lips. Tonight, we send our salaams to all of them. Say salaam to our master, Imam Husayn (a), salaam to Sayyidah Zainab (a), salaam to the flag bearer of Imam Husayn (a), Hadhrat Abul Fadhlil Abbas (a), salaam to the children of Imam Husayn (a), salaam to the family of Imam Husayn (a), and salaam to the companions of Imam Husayn (a).

THE SHUHADAH HAD BASIRAH

All the companions of Imam Husayn (a), all the martyrs of Karbala, shared many great characteristics. Tonight, we want to discuss one of these characteristics. They all had basirah, the eye of insight. What is basirah? Those of us who are fortunate to be blessed with healthy eyes can see the world around us, but we can only see things from the outside; we cannot see the inside. For example, when you look at the ocean, what do you see? You see the blue surface of water, but do you get to see everything that's inside it? No, you have to go inside the water and dive deep to see all the great things that exist in the oceans. The ocean water above a coral reef often looks plain and unremarkable. But if you are able to dive deep under its surface, you will see a world of astounding color and beauty.

I gave you the example of the ocean just to help you understand what it means to have an eye of insight. There are things we can see, but seeing is different than understanding what's right and wrong, and what's true and false. The eye of insight helps us see things inside and it is with that basirah, that eye of the heart, that we get to differentiate between haqq and batil, right and wrong. Where does this understanding come from? Of course, it is guidance that is provided by the source of all right and truth, Allah. Those who have strong belief in Allah and act on those beliefs are given the special blessing of basirah. As our scholars have mentioned, basirah is "a light within us with which we can see the inside of things."

Let me give you another example. With my eyes, if I go to a grave yard and look around, all I can see are the stones on the graves. But the eye of the heart makes me think about death and how we have to face the consequences of our actions when our souls leave this world and enter another world. This eye on my face can read what is written on a gravestone: that this person died when they were very young. But the eye of the heart makes me think, "Oh, so not everyone gets to live until they are old; some people die when they're young, so we have to make good choices now so we can prepare for the akhirah because we may not get the chance to become old." The eye of my heart makes me think, "I wonder how some people can doubt the existence of a Lord, when it's so clear that we are put on this earth, but eventually

our time in this world will expire and we will have to leave." The eye of my heart makes me think, "I am not going to take anything from this world into my grave, so I better be working on allowing my soul to become decorated beautifully with pure beliefs and characteristics, because that's what I will be taking with me when I leave here."

That is the concept of basirah, the eye of insight. The Noble Prophet of Islam (s) said, "A person who cannot see with this eye is not blind; the real blind person is the one who cannot see with the eye of his heart, who does not have basirah."

THE EYE OF BASIRAH

Those who have basirah learn from everything around them. When you travel to different parts of the world, yes, you get to see different cultures. But those who have basirah see so much more. For example, when you go to a castle of a king, you may see a very beautiful building and say, "Wow, this is such a cool castle! I wish I could live in a castle like this!" But someone with basirah says, "Wow, this king built this beautiful castle, but he's gone now. He couldn't take this castle with him to the afterlife." We learn from this that we shouldn't be attached to the things in this world. All that matters is how we use our belongings for the sake of Allah.

Those with basirah see Allah and His signs in everything when they look around the world. When they look at all the beautiful things in nature, they realize that this life and world cannot come from nowhere, that it must have a creator. So, it is basirah that helps us understand that everything comes from one Creator who is in charge, tawheed. When we look at the cycle of green leaves on the trees, and see how they change color in the fall, and then fall off in the winter, only to sprout up as green little leaves again in the spring, many people just ignore it because they are too distracted with other things. Others might think, "Oh wow, that's so cool!" But those who have basirah look at this and think of the Day of Judgment. They think about the fact that our souls are not made for this world — they're made for eternal life in the hereafter, and that we're only in this world for a very short period of time. Like those leaves, Allah will wake us to live another life after living this one here.

WHO HAS BASIRAH?

So, who are those who have basirah? They are the ones who obey Allah and try to follow the teachings of the Qur'an and Ahlul Bayt (a), and who are always trying to learn and understand so they can know the truth and do what's right. Maybe the best example of those who have basirah are the martyrs of Karbala, so let's talk about some of them.

One of the greatest martyrs of Karbala who was known for his basirah is Hadhrat Abul Fadhlil Abbas (a). Imam as-Sadiq (a) has said, "Our uncle Hadhrat Abbas had great basirah." And he used this basirah on the night and day of Ashura. On the night of Ashura, Imam Husayn (a) spoke to his companions and told them that whoever stayed would be killed, so he granted them permission to leave. But Hadhrat Abbas, with great basirah, stood up and said, "We will never leave you! How can we live after you? May Allah never bring a day that we are alive and you are not among us!" You see, he knew the value of the Imam because he had ma'rifah, true and deep understanding, of his duties toward his Imam, and would not let his Imam die before he sacrificed himself.

Another example of someone who had great basirah was Hadhrat Ali al-Akbar (a). When the caravan was getting closer and closer to Karbala, Ali al-Akbar (a) saw Imam Husayn (a) walking and saying "Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'oon," or "Surely, we are from Allah and surely, we will return to Him."

Hadhrat Ali al-Akbar asked his father, "Why are you saying this?"

At this time, Imam Husayn (a) told him that they were soon going to reach Karbala, where they would all be killed. Now, look at the question that Ali al-Akbar (a) asked with so much basirah. He asked his father, “Are we not on the right path?”

Imam Husayn (a) said, “Yes, we are.”

When his father said yes Hadhrat Ali al-Akbar (a) said, “Then we are not concerned about dying.” Hadhrat Ali al-Akbar was happy to attain such martyrdom that is in the path of goodness and the truth.”

This was because he had basirah. He knew that as long as he died for the haqq, the rightful truth, Allah would be pleased with him and he would have a high place in the hereafter.

There is another person who also had basirah, but who was not martyred in Karbala. Remember, many people were martyred in the way of Imam Husayn (a) before Ashura, and one of them was Qais. Qais was a messenger of Imam Husayn (a), and he used to take the Imam’s letters to the people of Kufa. One day, Qais was arrested by the enemies. He knew that the enemies should not know what was written in the letter, so he put it in his mouth and swallowed it.

He was brought in front of Ibn Ziyad, who told him, “I will kill you unless you go to the minbar and curse Imam Husayn (a) in front of everyone.”

Qais, who had basirah, thought for a second about what he could do to tell everyone about Imam Husayn (A). Then, he said okay. Everyone was invited to the masjid, as Qais went on top of the minbar. Instead of saying bad things about Imam Husayn (a), though, he began saying good things about Imam Husayn (a) to all the people who were sitting there. Ibn Ziyad became furious and had Qais martyred.

And do you know who had more basirah than anyone else on the day of Ashura in Karbala? It was Imam Husayn (a). Imagine being in Karbala with 72 men and facing an army of thousands. Imam Husayn (a) knew he could never win the battle, but it was not about winning or losing in the short term. It was about pleasing Allah and saving Islam, and only a person with basirah could look at things that way. On this day, Imam Husayn (a) kept saying he was content with Allah’s will. He didn’t say, “Ok fine, Allah, I surrender to Your will,” but he said, “I am satisfied with Your will.”

How is that possible that he was happy to see his six-month-old infant die in his arms? To see his young son Hadhrat Ali al-Akbar cut into pieces? To see all his loved ones killed in front of his eyes? How? Because he knew that all this was going to save Islam, and please Allah. And whatever pleases Allah, pleases Imam Husayn. And that is why Allah is also very pleased with Imam Husayn (a), with the children of Husayn (a), and with the companions of Husayn (a).

MUSEEBAH:

اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ابَا عَبْدِ ٱللَّهِ
وَعَلَىٰ ٱلارْوَاحِ ٱلَّتِي حَلَّتْ بِفِنَائِكَ
عَلَيْكَ مِنِّي سَلاَمُ ٱللَّهِ ابَداً
مَا بَقِيتُ وَبَقِيَ ٱللَّيْلُ وَٱلنَّهَارُ
وَلاَ جَعَلَهُ ٱللَّهُ آخِرَ ٱلْعَهْدِ مِنِّي لِزِيَارَتِكُمْ
اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَىٰ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ عَلِيِّ بْنِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اوْلاَدِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اصْحَابِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ

Tonight is the 10th night of Muharram, the eve of Ashura. It is a very tragic night, a very sad night. It is the last night on this earth for the 72 martyrs of Karbala. It is the last night for brothers to be with their sisters, for sisters to be with their brothers, for fathers to be with their children, for mothers to be with their sons. It is the last night for little Sakina to be with her baby brother, Ali al-Asghar. Indeed this night is never to be forgotten. It is a night to shed more tears, a night to do more matam. Tonight, the mothers are sitting with their children, and what are these mothers of Karbala telling their beloved children? They're preparing them for tomorrow. They're preparing them to sacrifice their lives. Why? Because they know Imam Husayn (a) is on the right path — the path to save Islam.

Tonight, if we walk alongside the tents in the camp of Imam Husayn (a), in one tent we hear the companions reciting Qur'an. In another tent, we hear the companions making du'a to Allah. In another tent, people are performing salaah and praying to Allah. In another tent, people are giving their wills to each other. They are talking about how they should go first tomorrow and sacrifice their lives before the children and family of Imam Husayn (a).

And in one tent, you can hear the sound of a baby crying. That baby is Ali al-Asghar Abdullah ar-Radhi, the six-month-old baby of Imam Husayn (a) who has not had anything to drink for some time. Maybe his mother Rubab is singing him a lullaby, so that little Ali al-Asghar may go to sleep. Tonight is the last night that Hadhrat Rubab will hold Ali al-Asghar in her arms.

The plains of Karbala show us two different sides of human beings: one is the beautiful side that shows us how humans can become the best of the best and sacrifice everything they have for Allah — and that's the side of Imam Husayn (a) and his companions, the side of the martyrs of Karbala. And then there's the other side, which shows us how evil a man can become, and that's the side of the soldiers of Yazid. Now, some of them would read the Qur'an or pray, so if you didn't know them, maybe you thought they were on the right path, but Ali al-Asghar and the martyrdom of Ali al-Asghar showed history who is the righteous one and who is the oppressor — who is right and who is wrong.

After everyone was martyred and Imam Husayn (a) was left all alone, he was about to go to the battlefield. But Hadhrat Rubab might have asked Imam Husayn (a), "Ali al-Asghar is dying of thirst; can you give him some water?"

Imam Husayn (a) cradled Ali al-Asghar in his arms and walked toward the enemies and said, “If you have no mercy on me, have mercy on this little baby! This little baby hasn’t done anything wrong to you. All he wants is some water!”

Some of Yazid’s soldiers said, “We should give the water to the little child,” and some of them said “No, Imam Husayn (a) and his family and everyone in his camp must die thirsty!”

Umar ibn Sa’ad became worried that some of his soldiers may turn against him, so he turned to his best archer, Harmalah, and said, “What are you waiting for? Silence this little child!” And Harmalah did. He aimed an arrow at Ali al-Asghar, at this little infant of Imam Husayn (a). Did he use a small arrow for a little child? No, it’s been said that he used an arrow not with one head, not with two heads, but with three sharp heads. This was the type of arrow that was used to hunt down large beasts. Why an arrow with three heads for such a small child?

This is where you can see who was right and who was wrong, who was righteous and who was evil. If the soldiers of Yazid were good people, they wouldn’t have to kill a little infant. But my dear brothers and sisters, an arrow with three sharp heads flew across the desert of Karbala, and that arrow pierced the tiny neck of Ali al-Asghar, slaughtering him instantly. Allahu Akbar! Imagine how Imam Husayn (a) felt at that moment. Instead of water, Ali al-Asghar got an arrow in his neck. And then, Imam Husayn (a) walked back with tears in his eyes and according to some reports, buried his little infant with his own hands in the plains of Karbala.

The martyrdom of Ali al-Asghar showed everyone in history how evil the soldiers of Yazid were, that they did not even have mercy on a little infant. This is a very sad story, and we pray to Allah to soften our hearts so that we can be heartbroken hearing this story and shed tears, but remember, this is a very important lesson for all of us — that no matter how young you are, all of you have the potential to help your Imam. Ali al-Asghar is a reminder for all of us to always always be on the path of righteousness, no matter how young or old we are.

Speech #11: Ikhlaas

LECTURE OBJECTIVES:

- Children will learn about one of the qualities of the shuhadaah of Karbala, ikhlaas (sincerity).
- Children will learn how to cultivate and increase ikhlaas within themselves.

LECTURE CONTENT:

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحمَنِ الرَّحِيم

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلاةُ وَالسَّلامُ عَلى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلينَ اَبِي الْقَاسِمِ مُحَمَّد وَ آلِهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ الطَّاهِرِينَ

سِيَّمَا بَقِيَّةُ الله فِي الْاَرَضِين

Salaamun alaykum, my dear brothers and sisters. Alhamdulillah, we thank Allah for giving us the opportunity to come together for one more night to remember Imam Husayn (a) and the other shuhadaah of Karbala. We remember the many lessons they have taught us, and inshaAllah we can apply these lessons to our own lives so that we can become better Muslims.

Imam Husayn (a) had many family members and companions who joined him in Karbala and dedicated their lives for him. If we look closely, we can learn a lot from them. One of these very dedicated family members was the brother of Imam Husayn (a), Hadhrat Abbas.

Imam Zayn ul-Abideen (a) once said, “May Allah have mercy upon my uncle, al-’Abbas. He put his brother before himself; he did well, and sacrificed himself for his brother until he lost his two hands for this sake. This is why instead of his two hands, Allah will give him two wings with which he will fly with the angels in Paradise, just like Ja’far ibn Abi-Talib [the uncle of the Prophet (S)]. Hadhrat Abbas holds a special position in the eyes of Allah, one which all the martyrs will wish they had on the day of Qiyamah.”

From this hadith, we can see that the position of Hadhrat Abbas is so high that all the martyrs will hope and wish they could have his status on the Day of Qiyamah.

Like we said, many people sacrificed their lives for Imam Husayn (a) on the day of Ashura, but they did not become al-Abbas. So what makes Hadhrat Abbas so great in the eyes of Allah?

You see, Hadhrat Abbas had many qualities that made him so great. For example, he had excellent akhlaq. He was completely obedient to Allah and his Imam and brother, Imam Husayn (a). He also had great knowledge of Allah and Islam. But there is one special quality of Hadhrat Abbas (a) that is a mystery and a secret between him and Allah. This was his ikhlaas, or sincerity. Having ikhlaas means that your intention is pure and your actions are only to make Allah happy, not to show off or make other people happy.

Having ikhlaas is very important and loved by Allah. We learn from the Ahlul Bayt (a) that your intention — the reason why you’re doing something — is more important than the action itself. So, this means that it doesn’t matter if I am the president of the masjid or a volunteer who helps clean the restrooms. One actions is not better than the other — the intention behind the action is what matters. As long as my intention is for the sake of Allah, I will get more rewards.

One day, Imam as-Sadiq (a) was explaining the meaning of the second verse of Surah al-Mulk:

الَّذِى خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا

[He] who created death and life to test you [as to] which of you is best in deed. (67:2)

The Imam (a) explained, said, "This verse doesn't mean that the best person is the one who does more deeds, but the one who performs the best actions, and the best action is that in which one's heart is filled with love and awe of Allah, and where you are doing the action with the best of intentions and for the best reason."

Therefore, having sincerity in our intentions is one of the keys to having the best actions, and this makes us have the most value in the eyes of Allah.

DEFINITION OF IKHLAAS

So, we said that having ikhlaas means having a pure intention, but what does this actually mean? We see in our aḥadīth that Imam as-Sadiq (a) said, "A sincere action is when you do not want anyone to praise you for it except Allah, the Great."

This means that we perform our acts of worship purely for Allah, and not for anyone else in any way. We shouldn't perform our actions to show off or so that other people say good things about us. It is important for us to constantly ask ourselves, "Why am I doing this? Is my intention pure?" Whenever we are about to do a good deed, such as giving charity or volunteering, we must check our intentions. Nowadays, you see a lot of people posting pictures or videos of themselves performing good actions on social media. This can have a really bad impact on our ikhlaas, because maybe we start focusing more on how many "likes" or "views" we get, rather than why we are performing this action.

Additionally, we sometimes find that we are doing an act of worship out of habit and just to get done with it. This is another example of lack of Ikhlaas because we are doing it for ourselves, not for Allah.

PRACTICING IKHLAAS

InshaAllah in these nights, we can all work on practicing ikhlaas and purifying our intentions. In order to do this, let's discuss a few steps we can take.

1. Reflect
   The first step we need to take in order to practice ikhlaas is to reflect on ourselves. We can see if our actions are purely for Allah by taking a step back and asking ourselves why we do certain actions. For example, when I help around the house, do I want people to know I'm helping? If I don't get a "Thank you" or no one finds out that I'm the one who washed the dishes, do I become upset? Or am I happy that I helped and no one found out? Am I happy knowing that Allah is the only one who saw my good deed? Am I doing this action only because my mom and dad told me to? Or is it because I know that helping a believer is one of the best deeds that is pleasing to Allah, and being helpful and good to my parents is so important to Allah that He mentions it right after the command to worship Himself in the Qur'an? Do I try to help out even when people don't tell me to? Asking myself these questions will help me figure out if my intentions are for Allah or other people.

2. Never wish to impress people
   We all have a soul, which is called our nafs. Our nafs wants to be recognized and have others pay attention to it. This tempts us to become more religious so that our community can like us more. So, instead of doing good deeds for Allah, I do them for other people. But I need to be careful and make

sure I'm always watching over my nafs, the same way a nurse is always checking on his or her patients. It's ok if someone encourages us or acknowledges our actions, but we need to make sure that we're not doing a deed solely to get that praise. Our main intention shouldn't be showing off or looking to impress other people.

We see that politicians can often get involved in politics because being in the spotlight makes them very happy. Even if we are taking on leadership positions, we should be very careful to do so out of a sense of responsibility, to help the cause of Ahlul Bayt (a), and to use the talents Allah has given us, not to be in the spotlight because we like that feeling.

3. Doing difficult actions
   One way we can increase our ikhlaas is by performing difficult actions. Often, these are those actions that neither we, not others, want to do. Sometimes the most sincere action is the most difficult. Prophet Muhammad (S) has told us, "The best of deeds is the most difficult of them."

   So, having ikhlaas means being sincere and having pure intentions. Ikhlaas is what makes the quality of our actions higher. The better our actions are, the better they become vehicles for getting closer to Allah.

MUSEEBAH:

اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ابَا عَبْدِ ٱللَّهِ
وَعَلَىٰ ٱلارْوَاحِ ٱلَّتِي حَلَّتْ بِفِنَايِكَ
عَلَيْكَ مِنِّي سَلاَمُ ٱللَّهِ ابَداً
مَا بَقِيتُ وَبَقِيَ ٱللَّيْلُ وَٱلنَّهَارُ
وَلاَ جَعَلَهُ ٱللَّهُ آخِرَ ٱلْعَهْدِ مِنِّي لِزِيَارَتِكُمْ
اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَىٰ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ عَلِيِّ بْنِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اوْلاَدِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَىٰ اصْحَابِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ

Today is the day of Ashura, a very sad day, a day full of tragedy. What shall we recite today? Which tragedy shall we remember today? So much suffering, so much sacrifice, so much patience — who shall we cry for today? Who shall we do maatam for today? So much to cry for, so much to do matam for. My friends, if we do not cry today, when else would we cry? If we do not do matam today, when else will we do matam? Today is dedicated to the master of all the martyrs that ever lived on this planet, Sayyid ush-Shuhada, the son of Fatima az-Zahra (a), the grandson of Muhammad al-Mustafa (s), the light of the eyes of Ali al-Murtadha (a), Aba Abdullah al-Husayn (a).

Imam Husayn saw so much tragedy and suffering today when his companions went to the battlefield one-by-one and were martyred. When His son Ali al-Akbar went to the battlefield, he didn't come back. Aun and Muhammad, the young sons of Sayyidah Zainab (a). went to the battlefield, and they were martyred. Qasim was martyred in a very tragic way, Abul Fadhlil Abbas went to the alqamah and was martyred and didn't return. Even 6-month-old Ali al-Asghar was martyred.

And now, Husayn is all alone, thirsty, tired, heartbroken, but he kept on. All Imam Husayn (a) was worried about was saving Islam for you and me, for all of us, and now it is time for Imam Husayn (a) to go to the battlefield, and it's time to say farewell to his beloved family. O what a sad farewell! Everyone is crying — Sayyidah Zainab (a), Sayyidah Umme Kulthoom (a), Sakina (a) — all the women are crying because the Imam of their time, the grandson of their Prophet, is about to go to the battlefield and fight with thousands of enemies.

Imam Husayn (a) began saying farewell to his family, to all the women and children. Finally, Imam Husayn (a) got on his horse to move towards the battlefield, but suddenly his horse stopped. O what a tragic scene! Boys and girls, take your hearts to Karbala and picture this. He looks down and sees his young daughter is holding the feet of the horse. She might have said, "Baba, can you come off the horse?"

Imam Husayn (a) loves his daughter Sakina. So he comes off the horse, and then Sakina says, "Baba, Uncle Abbas, Brother Ali Akbar, they all went to the battlefield and didn't come back, what will happen to me if you go to the battlefield and don't come back?"

The Imam (a) says, "My darling, Sakina, do not cry, my love. Do not burn the heart of your father." He gives Sakina one last hug and heads for the battlefield. It's not easy, but he knows this is what Allah wants. Imam Husayn (a) was brave and strong. After all, he is the son of Imam Ali (a). He fights with great might, even though he hasn't had water, and he kills some of Yazid's best warriors. Our great Imam fights like a lion, pushing back the enemy army. The enemies realize that they cannot fight Imam Husayn (a) like that, so like cowards, they surround him and shoot arrows at him from all directions.

It is very hard for me to tell you how Imam Husayn (a) was martyred. Imam Husayn (a) was martyred by one of the worst people that ever lived, his name was Shimr. Shimr didn't have any good actions, let alone having ikhlaas in his actions. He only cared about this world. On the day of Ashura, he became the killer of our master, Imam Husayn (a), while Sayyidah Zainab (a) was watching.

Today is a day that we say, "Labbayk Ya Husayn!" We say, "Ya Husayn, we were not there on the day of Ashura in Karbala to help you, when you called for help and nobody answered you. But after 1400 years, we answer you! We answer your call, and we say 'Labbayk Ya Husayn!'" And insha'Allah when the Imam of our time, Imam al-Mahdi (aj) returns, we will answer his call and we will help him. Brothers and sisters, let's sincerely try to improve ourselves and have ikhlaas so that we can be amongst our Imam's sincere followers. Now, all of you say this with me, "Labbayk Ya Husayn! Labbayk Ya Husayn! Labbayk Ya Husayn! Labbayk Ya Mahdi! Labbayk Ya Mahdi! Labbayk Ya Mahdi!"

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